

THE TIMES

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'We are the very best of friends...we love each other as well very much, and it's great'

Family wedding at Windsor for Prince Edward

By ALAN HAMILTON

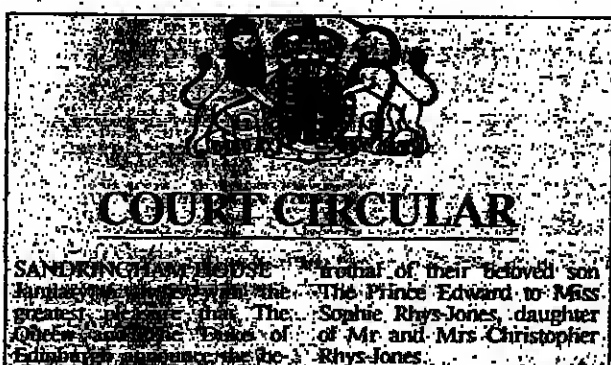
PRINCE EDWARD is determined to have a family wedding rather than a public spectacle when he crowns a five-year courtship by marrying Sophie Rhys-Jones later this year.

The couple, whose engagement was announced by Buckingham Palace yesterday, will marry in the late spring or early summer at St. George's Chapel, the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter inside Windsor Castle. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were said to be thrilled at the news of their youngest son's impending marriage to the 33-year old public relations executive.

Miss Rhys-Jones's parents — whose permission the Prince sought as well as that of his own — said at their home near Tunbridge Wells that they were equally delighted by the announcement.

Senior Palace sources insisted privately last night that the decision not to turn his wedding into a major tourist attraction in central London was the Prince's alone, and that he had not faced any pressure from the Queen or Downing Street to arrange a scaled-down ceremony more in keeping with the mood of Blairite Britain.

But sources acknowledged that the 34-year-old Prince was "not unconscious" of changes in public perception of the monarchy since the last first-prince royal wedding, that of the Duke and Duchess of York in Westminster Abbey in 1986. Posing for photographs in the garden of St James's Palace yesterday, the Prince said he had a particular fondness



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM, Norfolk. The Prince Edward, to Miss Sophie Rhys-Jones, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Rhys-Jones.

The official announcement in *The Times* Court Circular. Page 24
Best friends. Page 3
Spotless dukedom. Page 5
Discreet charm. Page 4
James Brown. Page 22

for Windsor, and that it was "somewhere slightly different". Miss Rhys-Jones, showing off her white gold ring set with heart-shaped diamonds from Asprey, Cardiff, said she expected a high degree of interest but that the wedding was "essentially a personal matter and a family occasion".

If the ceremony is low-key, it will be so only by comparison with the first marriages of his mother, aunt, brothers and sister: St George's can accommodate more than 800 guests. The Palace said last night that no decision had yet been taken on whether to allow live television coverage of the service. Officials pointed out last night that Prince Edward, who is seventh in line to the throne, was a much less high-profile figure than the Prince of Wales; he has followed his own career and performed relatively few public engagements. Like most other members of his family, he is not supported by the Civil List.

Genealogists suggested that

on his marriage, Prince Edward may be created Duke of Cambridge, although, in line with present-day trends, it may be a lifetime dukedom rather than an hereditary one. Speculation has surrounded the couple since they first met at a real tennis match in 1993, launching one of the longest unofficial courtships in modern royal history. At the time, the monarchy was at a low point with the Princess Royal divorced and remarried, the Prince's elder brothers both on their way to divorce.

Prince Edward has been under an enormous obligation not to repeat his siblings' marital mistakes. By comparison with his own lengthy courtship, both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York virtually rushed into marriage. Although the Princess Royal had a longer and more leisurely courtship with Captain Mark Phillips, that marriage, too, ended in divorce. Miss Rhys-Jones was adamant yesterday that she and

the Prince had not lived together during their long association, but it is a fine definition. A suite of rooms at Buckingham Palace was put at her disposal early in the courtship, and she has used them frequently.

She has also been a regular companion of the Prince at Royal Family gatherings, including the annual summer holiday at Balmoral and the Christmas break at Sandringham, where for several years she has joined the Queen and other members of the family at church on Christmas Day.

The Prince and Miss Rhys-Jones are several years older than the average age for first marriage, and have had ample opportunity to get to know each other well. The Prince has been exceedingly careful in ensuring that he has picked the right partner. A successful union has great potential to restore the monarchy's standing; another failure would be a dangerously damaging blow to public perception of the institution.

He acknowledged as much yesterday when he said: "We are the very best of friends, and that's essential. It also helps that we happen to love each other as well very much, and it's great. We are very happy at the moment, and long may it continue."

The Prince finally proposed to Miss Rhys-Jones shortly before Christmas, putting an end to an agonisingly long wait. Apart from a natural caution engendered by the marital fate of his siblings, he was keen to wait until anniversary mourning for the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, was well past.



Sophie Rhys-Jones and Prince Edward announcing their long-awaited engagement yesterday after a five-year courtship

Both parties were also anxious to put their professional careers on a sound footing. The Prince has spent several years building up his television company, Ardent Productions, making several documentaries on royal history and therefore well aware of the potential for good or harm for the monarchy's future that lies in his hands. Miss Rhys-

Jones is now a partner in a successful London public relations consultancy.

Both said yesterday that they intended to continue working. They plan to live relatively modestly at Bagshot Park, the house in Surrey leased by Prince Edward last year.

Congratulations flowed in as soon as the news became

public. A spokesman for the Prime Minister, who was told before he left the Seychelles for an official visit to South Africa, said that both Tony and Che-

rie Blair were delighted. William Hague and Paddy Ashdown also sent their good wishes, as did Dr George Carey and Cardinal Basil Hume.

Blair speaks up for Brown

Tony Blair tried to halt feuding between rival teams at 10 and 11 Downing Street with a declaration of support for Gordon Brown, saying: "We will always work as a team. This partnership is built to last." Page 2

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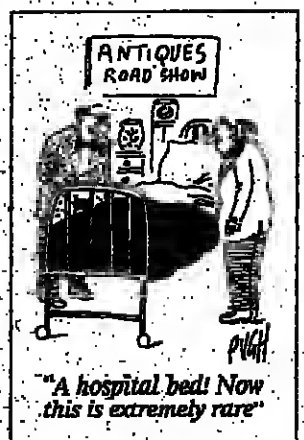
Flu crisis at hospitals dents Dobson's waiting list hopes

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S intensive care service is in crisis, doctors said yesterday as figures were released showing that the number of reported flu cases had risen by more than 80 per cent in a week.

With an epidemic looming, the Government's waiting list initiative is in danger of being knocked off course even though Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, announced yesterday that for the seventh month in a row the number of people waiting for an operation had fallen.

But Mr Dobson had to admit that even though the waiting lists had dropped by 31,000 during November, the number may have risen again last month because of the



"A hospital bed? Now this is extremely rare"

surge of accident and emergency cases, particularly from flu victims.

Waiting lists are now down to 1,162,000 — close to the level they were at the time of the gen-

eral election, having fallen from a peak of 1,297,000 in March. As the fall was announced, however, hospital managers were already cancelling hundreds of operations to clear beds for flu emergencies. Doctors battling to cope with the sudden rush for beds were pessimistic. "The intensive bed service is in crisis," Paul Lawler, President of the Intensive Care Society, said.

Although it is causing chaos in hospitals and numbers are rising sharply, flu has officially reached anything like epidemic proportions. The latest figures show that 97,100 people caught the infection last week compared to 53,200 a week earlier — a rise of 83 per cent. However this is still only 185 cases per 100,000 of the population over the week, well below the epidemic level of

400 per 100,000. Numbers are expected to peak in the coming week.

Anne Widdicombe, Shadow Health Secretary, visited University College Hospital in Mr Dobson's Holborn constituency in London. She said the senior accident and emergency consultant there told her that things were under control because the hospital had shifted resources from waiting list surgery to deal with emergencies. "Here is the proof of what the British Medical Association and the Opposition have been saying for months, which is that the political emphasis on the waiting list pledge has distorted priorities elsewhere and put patients in danger, fear and discomfort," she said.

Patients refused, page 9
Leading article, page 23

Shares keep on climbing

The stock market climbed to within touching distance of its record high as international markets continued to rally.

The FTSE 100 index closed up 190.6 points at 6148.5, just 30.2 points below last July's peak. Trading was heavy as investors overcame fears about the euro conversion.

In New York the Dow Jones rose more than 200 points to pass 9,500 points for the first time. Page 27

Sierra Leone flares up again

The Foreign Office is telling all Britons to leave Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, after a combined force of rebels and members of the ousted military junta entered the city. Warnings were broadcast on the World Service as the Sierra Leone Government said that anyone on the streets would be regarded as a rebel and shot. Page 18

60F: the hottest January day for 150 years

By TIM JONES

LONDON yesterday enjoyed its hottest January day for more than 150 years, but severe flooding brought chaos to householders and motorists in northern England.

The capital saw the thermometer climb to 15.7C (60F), equalling the temperature recorded in 1841 and beating by a fraction of a degree the century's previous record, which was set at Kensington Palace 77 years ago.

But while southerners took to their shirtsleeves, people in the North were battling out water.

Kendal was almost cut off as torrential overnight rain forced police to shut A-roads which disappeared under several feet of water. More than 50 homes in the town were flooded and fire crews had to use a boat to rescue seven people from a care centre for the disabled.

After the downpour, the Environment Agency issued red flood alerts for

the Cocker in Cockerham and the river Eden in Carlisle.

Those in London enjoying the balmy weather included 180 cheerleaders and musicians from Wisconsin who had performed in the capital's New Year's Day street parade. They were unable to return to the US because snowstorms had closed Boston airport.

The South has been basking in a warm southwesterly wind from the Continent. But this will change direction by the weekend to be replaced by a

band of damp low pressure from the Atlantic. The Meteorological Office said the warm spell would give way rapidly to more seasonal weather, with temperatures struggling to reach 7C or 8C (44F-46F) by the weekend.

The worst is yet to come. Winter is back with a vengeance next week as meteorologists predict an easterly wind bringing cold from the North Sea.

US snow, page 16
Forecast, page 26

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Trade minister is the biggest earner from shares



Lord Sainsbury of Turville

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE extraordinary scale of Lord Sainsbury of Turville's wealth was revealed yesterday when it emerged that the junior Trade and Industry Minister received £36 million in dividend payments last year.

An independent research body found that Lord Sainsbury received seven times more in dividend payments than any other company director.

The size of the dividends could come as fresh embarrassment to ministers, amid growing concern at the

role of wealthy businessmen in government. Like Geoffrey Robinson, the millionaire who recently resigned as Paymaster General, Lord Sainsbury has faced questions about offshore trusts and the extent of his generosity towards Labour.

The peer, who joined the Government last July, is one of Labour's biggest donors. He gave £2 million to party coffers before the general election and £1 million afterwards to help to clear the party's overdraft. He also funded Progress, the new Labour magazine.

The findings came from an analysis of company records by Labour Research, an independent organisation

funded by several trade unions but unconnected to the Labour Party. The group discovered 136 directors from 91 companies who received more than £500,000 in dividends in the financial year ending February 1998.

Lord Sainsbury came at the top of the list after receiving dividends worth £36,047,866. The next highest earner was David Instanca, chairman of a Kent-based printing firm, who received £5,249,966.

Other politicians on the list were Lord Harris of Peckham, the carpet millionaire and Tory backer, who received £2.6 million; Sir Tim Sains-

bury, the former Tory MP, who received £1.8 million; and Michael Heseltine, the former Tory Deputy Prime Minister, who earned £674,854 from his shareholdings in Haymarket publishers. Celebrities form the music world included George Harrison and Yoko Ono, who each earned £2.6 million.

Lord Sainsbury derives his wealth from an estimated £1.4 billion shareholding in the family supermarket chain. The last dividend payment from his shares was made days before he was appointed the minister responsible for science and technology. He immediately placed his entire

shareholding into a blind trust, handing over full control of the portfolio to the trustees.

The move, required by the ministerial code of conduct, avoids potential conflicts of interest between his ministerial duties and his personal investments. Although Lord Sainsbury — who earns no salary as a minister — has no control over the investments, he can continue to receive income from them.

But the peer is more generous to philanthropic causes than political ones. He donated £200 million in Sainsbury shares to the Gatsby Charitable Foundation in the early 1990s.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Orange faction behind bomb

A new loyalist paramilitary group claimed responsibility last night for a bomb attack on a Gaelic sports club which left a workman slightly injured. The Orange Volunteers said it planted the small booby-trap device which exploded at midday outside the GAA club in Magherafelt, Co Londonderry. In a coded statement the group said: "The wider nationalist community now have everything to fear, now the siege of Ulster continues, with the British Government abandoning the loyalist people and the Irish Government standing up for republicans the Orange Volunteers are ready to defend our people." The Volunteers, who oppose the Good Friday accord, emerged in November when eight armed, hooded men threatened to "assassinate the enemies of Ulster", particularly free IRA prisoners. Last month it claimed responsibility for a grenade attack on a bar in Crumlin, Co Antrim.

Meningitis death

A teenage boy who fell ill with meningitis after attending a Christmas party in Poynton, Cheshire, has died. Trevor Stoddon, 16, lost his fight for life at Maclefield District General Hospital, Cheshire. The teenager had been in hospital for a week. A 17-year-old college student who also attended the party has been treated for the same strain of meningococcal meningitis.

Sacking payout

A company that sacked a man after accusing him of lighting up in his car on its no-smoking site has paid him an undisclosed sum. John Dixon, 54, a shift supervisor, who denied smoking, had planned to take his case to an employment tribunal. Parkside Flexible Packaging of Wakefield claimed that a security camera recorded a flash as Mr Dixon lit a cigarette.

Dome pay claim

Workers on the Underground rail link to the Millennium Dome have demanded bonuses of up to £5,000 to finish the £2.8 billion project in time for the 2000 celebrations. Six hundred electricians want bonuses paid at the end of their contracts if the Jubilee Line extension, from Green Park in central London to Stratford, east London, is completed by November.

N-waste protest

Hundreds of demonstrators objecting to plans for a nuclear waste dump in one of the most scenic parts of west Wales laid siege to the Welsh Office yesterday. The Anglo-Irish consortium behind the dump says the remote site is ideal for storing nuclear waste, but the proposal has met an angry response in the tourism, fishing and farming heartland of Pembrokeshire.

Polish ruling

Poland's Supreme Court lifted an arrest warrant that accused Helena Wolinska, 79, wife of a former Oxford don of fabricating evidence used to convict and hang a Second World War Resistance hero in 1953. Ms Wolinska, married to Włodzisław Brus, Emeritus Professor of Modern Russian and East European Studies, feared extradition. She has lived in Britain since 1972.

Plank walked

An important exhibit dating from Viking times has been lost after a workman at Ireland's National Museum threw it on a skip because he thought it was rubbish. The oak plank from the hull of a 12th-century ship measured 10ft by 4ft and displayed typical Viking ship-building techniques. It was of great value in the study of ancient ocean-going vessels.

Blair pledges support for his Chancellor

THE Prime Minister moved swiftly yesterday to bolster Gordon Brown's position and put an end to the simmering feud between the rival camps of the two men, which has rocked the Government in recent weeks.

Tony Blair used his first public comments since the resignation of Peter Mandelson to underline the Chancellor's role in promoting new Labour and making the party electable.

Looking tanned but visibly strained after his week's holiday in the Seychelles, Mr Blair insisted that his relations with the Chancellor were as close as ever. "Gordon's work is crucial to the creation of new Labour and winning the election. We have always worked as a team and we will always work as a team," he said. "This partnership is built to last."

He dismissed as rubbish the suggestion that there was a rift. "Gordon and I have worked together for 15 years. We were probably the two people who did most to draw up the policy of new Labour."

The Prime Minister said that it was time to draw a line under recent "events" which have seen the resignation of two ministers and a press aide, and get on with delivering Labour's election promises. To what will be seen as a re-

Prime Minister wants to end party feuding, Jill Sherman reports from South Africa

launch of the new Labour project, Mr Blair and senior colleagues will spend the next few weeks making policy speeches on topics such as health, education, welfare and the economy. John Prescott, David Blunkett, Gordon Brown and Robin Cook will be part of a Cabinet drive to put Labour's programme back on track with a range of announcements.

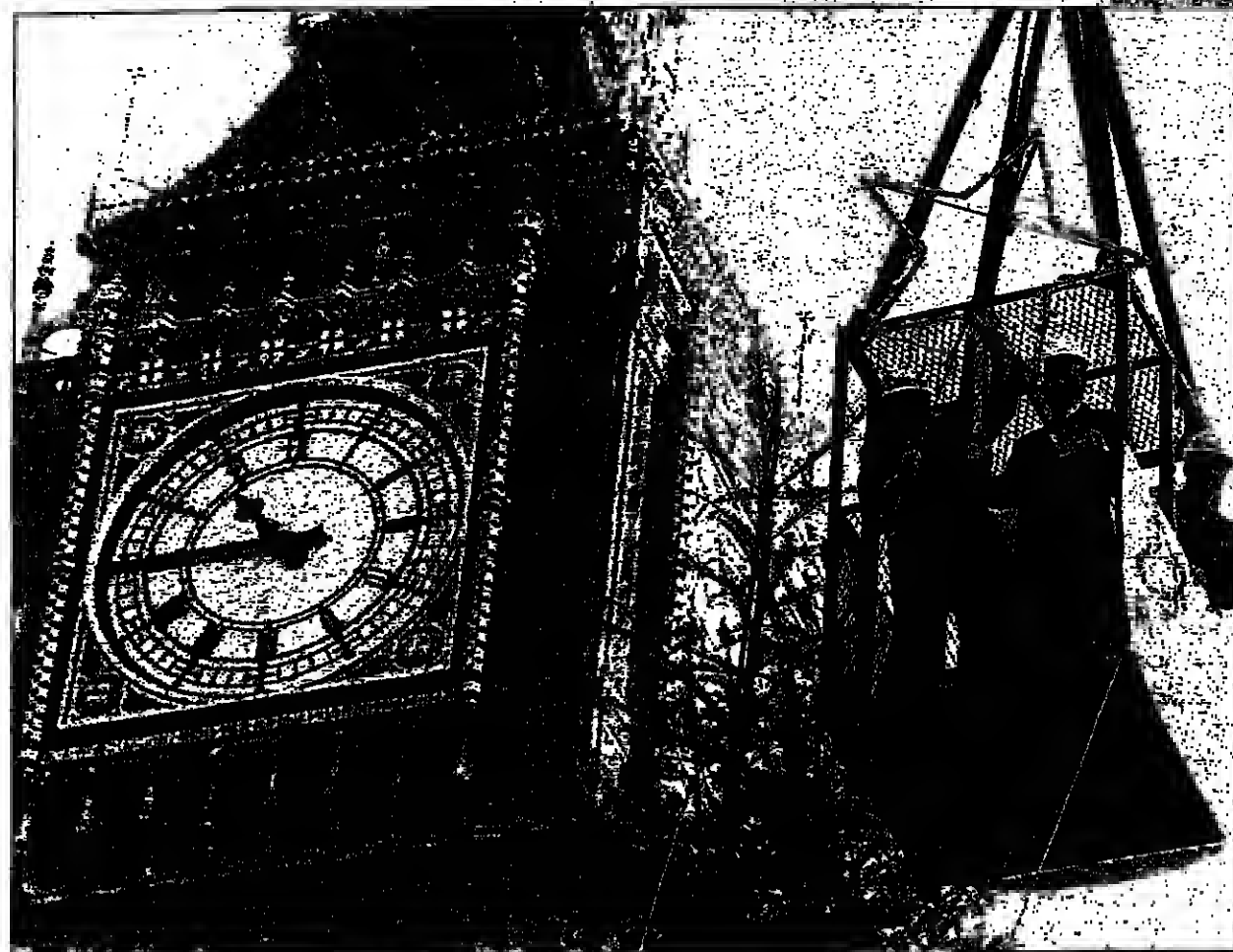
Mr Blair tried to put a brave face on the events of recent weeks as he left the Seychelles for his official visit to South Africa. "I am not denying that this has been a difficult week or two but these things happen," he said. But the Prime Minister looked tense and drawn and has evidently been deeply affected by the departure of Peter Mandelson, his former Trade and Industry Secretary, and the subsequent

events. During his holiday he worked two to three hours a day at his computer as well as talking by telephone with Alastair Campbell, his press secretary, Mr Brown and other ministers who were promoted in the mini reshuffle.

Mr Blair chose himself to refer to his relationship with Mr Brown following the resignation of Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's press secretary, after he had been persistently blamed for leaking details of the £373,000 loan to Mr Mandelson. The Chancellor was said to be "desolate" about the departure of one of his most powerful and loyal supporters.

Downing Street was said to have been determined that Mr Whelan should go after the row provoked by Mr Mandelson's resignation. But Mr Blair was adamant that the departure was handled in a way which was least damaging to Mr Brown.

Insiders said that the newspaper headlines following Mr Whelan's announcement had not been good for Mr Brown but they would have been a lot worse if the "Chancellor" had been forced to sack his press aide. They also made clear that the Prime Minister expected Mr Whelan to go within the next week rather than remain



John Prescott putting the Commons Christmas tree through a chipper yesterday as part of efforts to boost recycling

a target for Tory attacks. Mr Blair said he had no intention of being diverted from his New Labour programme of modernisation. He said that Mr Mandelson's departure would have no impact on the close relations with the Liberal Democrats and he suggested these could get even closer if it was in the interests of the country.

He also pointed out that the new appointments to the Cabinet — Steven Byers and Alan Milburn — were both modernisers, adding that Mr Byers,

the new Trade and Industry Secretary, was as enthusiastic about helping business to prepare for the euro as Mr Mandelson had been.

During a series of interviews with the British media on his arrival in Pretoria last night, Mr Blair said that he had no regrets about taking a holiday during such a critical period of his government. He said: "I have had eight days holiday with my family and I feel better for it. I have not had a proper day off since the Omagh bombing in Au-

gust." Mr Blair's efforts to present a united front were backed by Mr Prescott yesterday. He said that reports of a pact between himself and Mr Brown to exploit the departure of Mr Mandelson, which arose from a newspaper interview he gave last week, were "nonsense".

The Deputy Prime Minister, along with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, was at pains to draw a distinction between the present Government and its Tory predecessors by emphasising there was

no ideological split round the Cabinet table.

"Mr Prescott said: 'The divisions with them were on substance, ours have been highlighted on personalities rather than the Government's record.'"

David Clark, the former Cabinet minister sacked in last summer's reshuffle, said that the "unhappy events" of recent weeks should lead to the Government adopting a more collegiate style.

Mike Keegan, page 16

Barristers to launch Kitemark scheme

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

BARRISTERS' chambers are to be kitemarked to stamp out disreputable practices such as double-billing of cases.

The scheme will be introduced this year as part of reforms to modernise the Bar overseen by Dan Brennan, QC, the new chairman who took over this week.

The Bar is also to reconsider the rule that people cannot approach a barrister direct but must come through a solicitor. Already it allows professional bodies to deal directly with barristers: this month it is to consider licensing bodies such as trade unions, charities, health insurers and health authorities to brief barristers directly.

The Bar Council will publish the criteria for the kitemark plans later this year. They are likely to include how cases are managed, how time is billed to the client, how fees are charged and how well barristers communicate with clients. In particular it could stamp out the problem of late-returned briefs or instructions, causing a barrister to pull out of a trial at the last minute.

From Easter, chambers can apply for accreditation, or the Bar equivalent of a Kitemark, which will be granted by one of several outside organisations that have been approved by the Bar Council.

Brown advises Mandelson on his comeback

By ROLAND WATSON, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN has been advising Peter Mandelson about how to make a return to the political front line, possibly before the next election.

The pair, whose recent past has been marred by personal suspicion and the aggressive rivalry of their aides, have had a lengthy meeting with the full encouragement of Tony Blair.

The meeting provides clear evidence that Mr Mandelson is already turning his mind to a return to office less than a fortnight after he resigned over his £373,000 home loan from Geoffrey Robinson. The former Trade Secretary has already told friends: "I will be back."

Mr Mandelson's friends said it was far too early to speculate about the timing of any such return, but he and Mr Brown have discussed the possibility of his spending some time in Africa involved in charity work. As a student he travelled to Tanzania and later addressed Third World issues while working for the British Youth Council. Friends say that he is considering an offer from Voluntary Services Overseas to make a film abroad.

The meeting between Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown will raise eyebrows at Westminster, where the supporters of both men have been at daggers drawn for years. Although they were once close

friends, the leadership contest to succeed John Smith forced them apart after Mr Mandelson backed Mr Blair.

The meeting, which is part of a concerted effort by senior Labour figures to heal the deep divisions that have emerged from the wreckage of the home loan episode, has added irony. It was advice from Mr Mandelson to Mr Brown that sparked the freeze in their relations. The advice, in the form of a memo, was published earlier this week as part of the serialisation of an unauthorised biography of Mr Mandelson by Paul Routledge.

However, Mr Mandelson's friends say that he regards the support from the Chancellor as genuine and helpful.



Mr Brown: offered help to his old adversary

Business issues tartan tax warning

By JASON ALLARDYCE
SCOTTISH POLITICAL REPORTER

ALMOST one in ten firms could pull out of Scotland if the new Scottish parliament uses its income tax-raising powers, according to a new report.

The survey of 111 Scottish business leaders by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland found widespread hostility to the so-called tartan tax. Sixty per cent of those surveyed believed that the tax-raising powers would be "detrimental" to their businesses and 7 per cent would look to move if it made trading difficult.

Businesses fear wage costs could soar,

putting them at a competitive disadvantage if the new parliament exercises its power to increase income tax by up to 3p. They believe that jobs would also be shed as a result.

Labour and the Scottish Tories have ruled out using the powers during the first term of the new parliament, which will be elected in May. The Scottish National Party has not finalised its position, but the Liberal Democrats are prepared to put up or 2p on the rate of income tax for health and education investment if savings cannot be made elsewhere.

The Scottish Tory leader, David McLetchie, claimed that the SNP and Lib-

eral Democrats would levy the tartan tax immediately, given the chance, and that they must consider the voice of business.

David Spence, president of the accountants' institute, added: "It is vital that business is listened to as the success of this group will keep the Scottish economy strong. Politicians who wield the new tax-varying powers should take heed of these findings."

The survey found that four in ten business leaders believe that the tax-raising powers will make no real difference and that one in five are either committed to remaining in Scotland or are adopting a "wait and see" approach.

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Happiness is being best friends

The engaged couple were at ease with each other and the media's awkward questions, reports Alan Hamilton

THEY looked at each other a lot, and they laughed a lot. As Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones faced the press in the garden of St James's Palace yesterday, they seemed quietly and deeply at ease with each other.

There was none of the awkwardness of a similar occasion when the Prince of Wales and Diana Spencer announced their betrothal, nor any awkward observations of the calibre of Prince Charles's remark about being in love, "whatever that is". Nor was there the overdone touchiness of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson's announcement, when they all but threw bombs at each other.

And nor, mercifully, was there a repetition of a previous encounter with the media, when Prince Edward flounced out of a press conference, angered by journalists' undisciplined failure to be knocked out by *It's A Royal Knockout*.

Time has mellowed Prince Edward, and Miss Rhys-Jones knows a thing or two about public relations. They emerged from the palace arm in arm, she in a short-skirted grey suit with diamond trim on the lapels, he in a dark suit. They could have been a couple of moderately successful City traders getting hitched.

They posed for pictures by the door and strolled around the garden for a while. The January sky was a heavenly blue. The cameramen asked them to kiss. They seemed at first to demur, but when the photographers chorused that their masters would go mad if they did not return with a kiss picture, the couple agreed.

They answered questions with good humour, standing close together, but easily Miss

Rhys-Jones's ring hand rested on the Prince's forearm, and she looked up at him a great deal, but not in that sugary, over-rehearsed way that showbiz brides-to-be so often adopt. Asked why the couple got on, Prince Edward smiled as she gazed at him: "I don't know, we just do, really," Miss Rhys-Jones chimed in: "I think we share a lot of interests, we laugh a lot, we have a great friendship."

The Prince turned serious momentarily when asked why they had decided to announce the engagement now. "It's impossible for anyone else to understand why it has taken me this long," he said. "But I don't think it would have been right before, and I don't think Sophie would have said Yes if I had asked her before, and, hopefully, by the fact that she did say Yes, I must have got the timing right." The seriousness dissolved into laughter, and he shot his bride-to-be an intimate glance.

How exactly did he propose? "Well, I spoke it," said the Prince, with a tiny hint of mock exasperation. "I managed to take her completely by surprise. She had no idea it was coming, which was what I really wanted to do. The trouble is, everybody always speculating always made it very difficult. Every time there was another round of speculation I had to go very quiet again."

Miss Rhys-Jones adopted a particularly adoring look. "I was slightly stunned for a minute. Then I suddenly realised I should actually answer the question. I said 'Yes, Yes please.' She let out the hint of a girlish giggle.

The exchange took on a slightly more serious note when questioning turned to



Sealed with a kiss: Sophie Rhys-Jones and Prince Edward as they spoke to the massed ranks of the press yesterday in the garden of St James's Palace

the wedding venue. The Prince said: "I just have always enjoyed St George's and Windsor especially. It's just a wonderful setting. It's a glorious piece of architecture and it's somewhere slightly different."

The last phrase left volumes unsaid: about previous high-profile royal weddings that began as public spectacle and ended in grief. Prince Edward agreed that he was looking for something more low-key, but admitted that he would be deeply unpopular. Flashing another warm

glance at her fiancée, Miss Rhys-Jones added: "I think getting married is a very personal thing, and naturally there is going to be more interest in us than, obviously, with other

people, but it is a personal matter and it is a family occasion." Asked how she felt about joining the Royal Family, she agreed that it was "slightly nerve-racking in many ways,

but I am ready for it now and I am fully aware of the responsibilities and commitments". She looked confident enough to tackle anything that her strange new life might throw

at her. She also confirmed that she would keep a foot in the outside world by continuing with her job. Would her background in public relations help her to

cope? Yes, she said: she was perhaps slightly better geared up than others to second-guess what might happen.

And what of a family? The couple laughed, pleading the excuse of one step at a time.

They confirmed that both sets of parents were delighted at the news. Prince Edward denied that they had ever lived together, and Miss Rhys-Jones denied that she had ever issued any ultimatums on the matter of marriage. What about the ring? "It's that funny thing on Sophie's ring finger, actually. Diamonds are a girl's best friend, so I'm told."

"No, you're my best friend."

"Oh, right, sorry."

The key question could no longer be delayed. What about the failures of previous royal marriages? "Oh, someone had to bring that out, didn't they," said the Prince, hiding any irritation behind a laugh. He dodged the question of extra pressure on him as a result of other family misfortunes. "I think if anybody's going to get married, I hope they think that they are going to get it right."

Prince Edward had one final observation. "We are the very best of friends, and that's essential. It also helps that we happen to love each other as well very much, and it's great."

The encounter was over. Hand in hand, the couple walked back inside the palace. Within minutes the kiss was flooding television channels around the world and any hopes they might have harboured of a quiet family wedding vanished with the miss.

Reluctant suitors, page 22

Ring continues 150-year link forged by Victoria

By MICHAEL HARVEY

THE diamond engagement ring sparkling on Sophie Rhys-Jones's finger yesterday fittingly combined tradition and modern fashion.

The Prince slipped it on her finger for the first time when they met at Buckingham Palace yesterday after he flew back from an appointment in Glasgow.

They had commissioned the triple-diamond ring, estimated to cost up to £50,000, from Asprey and Garrard in London's Bond Street. The jeweller, which has royal connections stretching back 150 years, also made engagement rings for the Duchess of York and Diana, Princess of Wales.

The three diamonds — a 2.05-carat round stone surrounded by two smaller heart-shaped gems — are surrounded by 18-carat white gold. Gem experts in Hanton Garden said heart-shaped stones were among the most difficult to produce.

Asprey and Garrard was formed last September by the merger of two of the most exclusive jewellery houses, Gar-



The ring: three diamonds set in 18-carat white gold

rand has been Crown Jeweller since 1843, and Queen Victoria spent the equivalent of £8 million there during her reign.

The Princess of Wales's more traditional sapphire and diamond engagement ring was made by Garrard and cost about £20,000. It was an oval sapphire amid a cluster of 14 diamonds set in white gold. After her death, it was passed to her family.

The Duchess of York's engagement ring, costing

£25,000, was also made by Garrard. An oval ruby was surrounded by ten drop diamonds in a star-shaped cluster, mounted in 18-carat white and yellow gold.

The Queen's engagement ring was platinum and set with 11 diamonds. It took two men just over a week to make. The central stone was three carats, about the size of a woman's little finger nail. It came from a ring owned by the Duke of Edinburgh's mother.

The Princess Royal was given a ring with a large sapphire between two diamonds by her first husband, Mark Phillips, in 1973. For her second marriage in 1992, to Timothy Laurence, engagement and wedding rings were made by one of the groom's family friends, Carol Darby, of Winchester. The engagement ring was again sapphire and diamond.

Royal wedding rings are traditionally made of Welsh gold. Those of the Queen, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Princess of Wales and the Duchess of York were made from a nugget of gold mined in Wales in 1923.

Choice of chapel is break with tradition

By JOANNA BAILE

BY CHOOSING St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle for their wedding, Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones are expressing their desire for a more personal celebration.

Perhaps mindful that his elder brothers' and sister's ill-fated marriages took place amid the state pomp and grandeur of St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, Prince Edward appears to be opting for something a little more low-key.

He is, however, following in the footsteps of many of his more distant ancestors by choosing St George's, which has been the setting for royal weddings, christenings and funerals for over 500 years.

The last royal wedding there was the simple but stylish marriage of Lady Helen Windsor and Tim Taylor in 1992. Before then, it had not been used for a royal marriage since Princess Alice of Albany married Prince Alexander of Teck in 1904.

One royal wedding that enjoyed a long and fruitful marriage after a wedding at the chapel was Edward VII, who chose it for his wedding to



St George's Chapel, the venue for the wedding

Princess Alexandra of Denmark in 1863. The marriage lasted 47 years, until his death in 1910, and produced five children. However, his liaisons with Lillie Langtry, Lady Brooke and Alice Keppel are well documented.

Its position within Windsor Castle, considered to be the Royal Family's home, will have added attractions for the Prince, who grew up there and is known to be very fond of it.

The building's construction began in 1475 during the reign of Edward IV and it was unaf-

fectured by the great fire at the castle in 1992. The architecture of the chapel, which can hold up to 1,000 people, is one of the finest examples of Perpendicular Gothic in the country.

The chapel, a royal peculiar under the Queen's jurisdiction rather than an archbishop's, is the spiritual home of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, the oldest monarchical order of chivalry, founded by Edward III in 1348. Its all-male choir is drawn from the College of St George, a secular community of priests and laymen.

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Discreet charm of a bourgeois bride-to-be

UNDER the harsh scrutiny of the media yesterday, Sophie Rhys-Jones displayed the discretion, charm and vivacity that won Prince Edward's heart.

It is these qualities that have helped her to gain the affection and esteem of the rest of the Royal Family. Her poise and decorum were noted with unanimous approval as she waited for Prince Edward to propose. Not that she ever complained at the delay, despite reports to the contrary.

The prospect of marrying into the monarchy must have been daunting, but she has dealt with it as she does her public relations work — with a cool head.

Miss Rhys-Jones has gradually been introduced to royal life and has spent time at Sandringham and Balmoral with

Michael Harvey and Claudia Joseph find the Prince's choice reassuringly conventional

the Queen and other senior members of the Royal Family. The Duke of Edinburgh, in particular, is said to be a fan. Such is their approval that she has a laminated Buckingham Palace pass to get her through security and up to Prince Edward's apartment, a luxury previous royal girlfriends never enjoyed.

Her sporty side — she likes

skiing, sailing and windsurfing — is in her favour, as is her uncontroversial background. Unlike other recent royal brides she is the product of a stable home, the daughter of middle-class respectability, untrammelled by any aristocratic connections. Her father, Christopher, ran an import-export business dealing in car tyres with Hungary. Her mother, Mary, a former secretary, supplements the family income by taking in secretarial work at their Victorian farmhouse in the village of Brechley in Kent. Miss Rhys-Jones has an elder brother, David, who works in insurance.

She was educated privately, first at Dulwich College preparatory school in Cranbrook, Kent, then as a day girl at Kent College for Girls. She attended a secretarial college and worked part-time in a pub before, in classic Home Counties fashion, she moved to a flat in West Kensington in 1983.

Public relations was an obvious choice for the bright, bubbly young woman and she found a job as a secretary at the public relations firm Quentin Bell, then for three years at Capital Radio. She met Prince Edward there through friends and they became "nodding acquaintances".

Next she moved briefly to



Christopher and Mary Rhys-Jones outside their home in Kent after the announcement of the engagement yesterday

to go distinctly upmarket. In August 1993 she was sent to Queen's Club, the smart tennis venue in West London, where she met Prince Edward properly for the first time. Posing for publicity shots, she put her hand over his shoulder.

The Prince was smitten by her humour and confidence and within a few weeks they were an item. By October their secret was out. Miss Rhys-Jones's PR experience has helped her to cope with equanimity with the media's unceasing scrutiny. Only one

thing is guaranteed to annoy her, and that is to imply that she is a Diana clone. She has made attempts to present herself as a glamorous figure with a new haircut and designer clothes. But she knows she could never compete with the Princess, if only because of her "sturdy, not quite firm, Welsh legs".

Whatever royal role she will now take up, she is keen to keep up her PR work. In 1996 she and a colleague, Murray Harkin, 33, set up their own company, R-JH Public Rela-

tions, with a selection of up-market clients. Turnover last year was about £750,000.

Mr Harkin said: "She will continue to work for the foreseeable future. It is her own company. I think it has given her her own standing."

Miss Rhys-Jones told colleagues about the engagement on Monday and they celebrated with champagne. Mr Harkin said: "I have never seen Sophie so happy. She was absolutely radiant. I think she would like children one day. She loves children."

Barmaid who pulled pints at the local

By SUSIE STRIDER

IN THE small community of Brechley in Kent, where Sophie Rhys-Jones's family have lived for more than 30 years, villagers tutted at the invasion of a hungry press but could not contain their excitement that a local girl had made good.

Christopher Rhys-Jones disclosed that the Prince paid a visit last month to ask formally for his daughter's hand. Mr Rhys-Jones, 67, and his wife Mary emerged briefly from their £200,000 cottage confirming that they were "thrilled", "delighted" and "very happy".

The former car salesman, who once sold tyres to eastern Europe, said: "Prince Edward came down between Christmas and the new year, and asked my permission. I was extremely pleased. We like him immensely and we have known him some time. He is a very, very nice chap." Asked how his daughter would fit into royal circles, he said jokingly: "I think she will do very well. She isn't exactly pulled in. It has been a fairly long apprenticeship."

As an 18-year-old Miss Rhys-Jones was well known at the Halfway House, where she worked as a barmaid. Michael Noakes, 56, a farmer who has visited the country pub for 40 years, said: "She was pleasant, very attractive and well-mannered — a pleasure. She always used to pull the pints and would blather and joke with regulars."



Pub near the family home where Miss Rhys-Jones worked

Fashion is poisoned chalice for girl from the hockey sticks



Rhys-Jones: traditional tastes

By LISA ARMSTRONG, FASHION EDITOR, AND CAROL MIDGLEY

AS JOB descriptions go, it's something of a poisoned chalice. Yes, the perks are tempting. Yes, any female Windsor consort under 50 with twinkling eyes and a winning smile will be wooed from here to kingdom come by designers anxious to have royalty wear their product (which, as most of us are now cynical enough to appreciate, roughly translates as being showered with freebies). But think of the level of scrutiny that Sophie Rhys-Jones will henceforth be subjected to.

Yesterday's outfit — designed by

Tomasz Starwiski, grey with a sprinkling of beads round the collar — was a case in point the kind of outfit for the kind of situation that only royal-brides-to-be are likely to have to endure.

So who's to say whether or not she got it right? She looked as at ease as anyone with a score of television cameras bombing in on the fruits of their skincare techniques might reasonably be expected to look. Not that any of this will stop the world from putting in their pennyworth whenever they think she's spending too much, being too fashionable or conversely being too frumpy and letting Britain Down.

All the evidence suggests that

Miss Rhys-Jones is not desperately interested in being an icon of style or of any other variety. Those designers who have got to know her in the five years since she has been associated with her Prince speak of a no-nonsense English girl with no-nonsense tastes (though only one, anonymously, dared utter the word "Slouchy"). She does not, as yet, go in for regular facials, aromatherapy or colonic irrigation and is more likely to take part in a jolly game of tennis than punish herself on the stepping machine.

In other words, she's the kind of girl whom the media, misled by the Taras and Tamaras and their season tickets to Prada and Gucci,

believed no longer existed. She seems to prefer homegrown, trustily discreet designers such as Amanda Wakeley and Starwiski.

"She likes quite traditional clothes," says Maya Lucia Maini, the director for PR at Loewe, the company whose leather miniskirts, suede shirts and classy take on Euro-chic has featured strongly in Miss Rhys-Jones's wardrobe recently. "She tends to pick tailoring for work and quite sporty things off-duty. But I don't get the feeling clothes are a passion with her. Unlike Caroline, of Monaco, she wasn't brought up to be a clothes horse."

Still, the comparisons with Di-

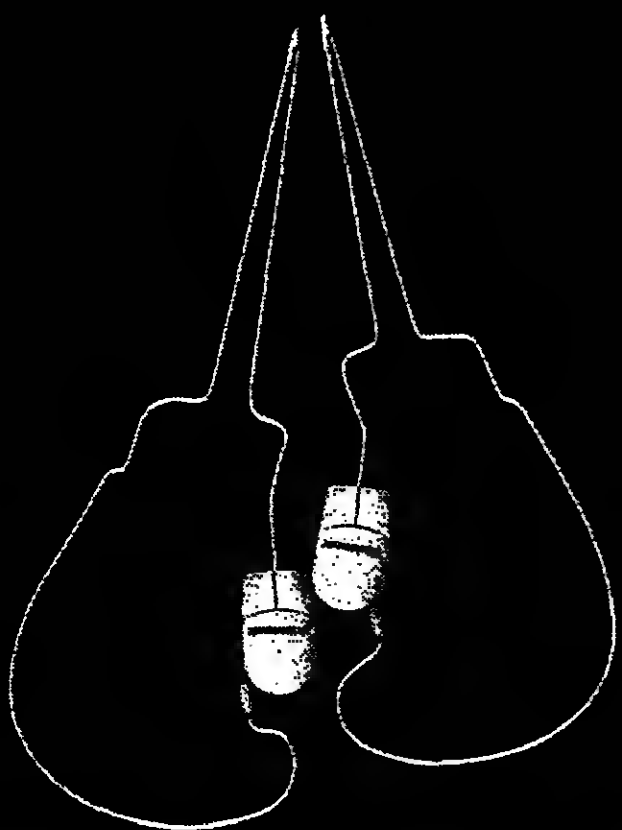
ana, Princess of Wales are inevitable, and prompted by the eerie likenesses in their hairstyles and deportment. A series of photographs of Miss Rhys-Jones, in *Heat* a year ago, wearing a black dress similar in its cut to the simple lines that the Princess had latterly made her own, seemed a strange statement at the time. Was the imitation deliberate?

Whatever the case, Miss Rhys-Jones will discover that her image from now on will never be within her control. As the Princess and the Duchess of York in their contrasting ways discovered, the media either love you or they don't — and what you wear is merely the icing.



Diana: inevitable comparisons

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Search begins for a spotless dukedom

Untarnished royal titles are in short supply, but the front-runner is Cambridge, reports Alan Hamilton

PRINCE EDWARD is expected to be created a duke on his marriage to Sophie Rhys-Jones. Genealogists believe that the most likely available dukedom is that of Cambridge.

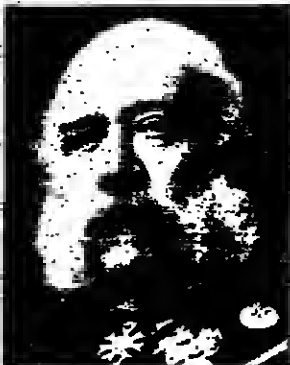
Created by the Stuarts in 1661, the title has an unfortunate history, but untarnished and unoccupied dukedoms are not in plentiful supply.

The first four dukes, all sons of James Duke of York, who became James II, died one after the other in infancy. The future George II was created Duke of Cambridge by Queen Anne in 1706; the title has been vacant since the death in 1904 of its last holder, George Duke of Cambridge, whose equestrian statue graces Whitehall.

George was Commander-in-Chief of the Army and a first cousin of Queen Victoria, neither of which prevented him from having a colourful private life. As a guest at Victoria and Albert's wedding in 1840, he met and instantly fell in love with Louisa Fairbrother, an actress five years his senior.

They lived as man and wife, Louisa being known as Mrs FitzGeorge, but they did not get around to a proper marriage ceremony until shortly before the birth of their third son. Even then they had to marry in secret, believing that the Queen would invoke the Royal Marriages Act — which requires the sovereign's permission for her children to marry — to prevent the union.

George was buried along with his wife in a mausoleum in Kensal Green cemetery, and they now have no male heirs living. Since then there has been only a Marquess of Cambridge, a nephew of the last duke and the brother of Queen Mary, who was given the title



Last holder of title: George, Duke of Cambridge.

in 1917 when he surrendered all his German titles at the height of the First World War. An alternative to Cambridge is that the newly engaged couple become Duke and Duchess of Sussex, a title that has had only one holder, a son of George III who was given it at the end of the 18th century. George had so many sons that he had to create new titles to satisfy them all.

Of the available dukedoms, the most unlikely to be bestowed on the Queen's third son is that of Clarence, which has an even more unfortunate history than Cambridge. The only Clarence to reach the throne was the duke who became William IV; the last holder, Albert, eldest son of Edward VII, has long been suspected of being the true identity of Jack the Ripper, the notorious killer of London prostitutes.

"Clarence is too closely associated with murky characters, and with drownings in butts of Malmsey, to be bestowed on one of the Queen's children," David Williamson, co-editor of *Debut's Peerage and Baronage*, said yesterday. "But given present-day trends, it is quite possible that any dukedom bestowed on Edward will only be for his lifetime, rather than a hereditary title."

Prince Edward, of course, would be perfectly entitled to buck all historical precedent and refuse all titles except the one with which he was born. That, however, would leave his bride with the unhappy cumbersome title of Her Royal Highness Princess Edward.



Louisa Fairbrother, the actress the Duke secretly married after she bore him two sons

Will it be a hit with shoppers?

By Adam Sherwin

MAKERS of royal memorabilia are hoping that this marriage will prove as lucrative as that of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1981.

Bone-china busts of Sophie Rhys-Jones are hastily being planned for the serious collector, while traders are preparing to hawk T-shirts depicting the couple.

More than 2,300 items were available at the time of the Waleses' wedding, encouraging the public to part with an estimated £383 million, a record for a royal event.

The wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York has produced few items of lasting value. A commemorative Sarah Ferguson plate will not make one rich. "They are good for Frisbee-throwing, but, sadly, they are virtually unsaleable," said Mark Oliver, royal ceramics expert at the auctioneers Phillips.

Royal Doulton admitted surprise at the engagement announcement: "We don't really have enough time if the wedding is in a couple of months, but we hope we can produce what people want."

Artist formerly known as Prince Edward

By Michael Harvey

IN THE first defining decision of his adult life, Prince Edward made it clear that he wanted to be his own man.

Instead of following his brothers into a career in the Armed Forces, he dramatically quit the Royal Marines after less than a year. The jeering criticism from the public is something that he will never forget.

The Queen's youngest son turned instead to the theatre and later founded his own television production company, Ardent Productions. He is now being called plain Edward Windsor, but admits that, despite a promise not to side on his royal connections, much of Ardent's initial success was based on programmes about his family's past. He now believes that being a prince is a hindrance in his profession because he has to prove himself a hundred times over.

The same can be said of his private life. The Prince, 34, is painfully aware of the monarchy's recently turbulent history, particularly the collapses of his brothers' marriages. More than anything, perhaps, the desire to avoid making similar mistakes in his relationship with Sophie Rhys-Jones has shaped the past five years of his life.

He has chosen St George's Chapel for his wedding because it was "somewhere slightly different", and he and his fiancée want no repeat of the spectacular marriages of the Prince of Wales at St Paul's Cathedral and the Duke of York at Westminster Abbey.

Miss Rhys-Jones was the Prince's first relationship of any substance. He had stepped out with a number of girls — including Ulrika Jonsson and the actress Ruthie Henshall — in his theatre days, and the media glare was intense. With Sophie, he was desperate to protect the blossoming romance.

Soon after it became public, he even took the then extraordinary step of publicly pleading with newspaper editors in an open letter to be left in peace. He has remained touchy on the subject, but yesterday the speculation was over and a markedly more confident and

self-assured Prince was on public display. With Miss Rhys-Jones at his side, he feels more grounded and, with Ardent at last about to turn the corner, he is sure he has found his true vocation.

He always said that he would not think about marrying until his business was up and running. It has lost £1.5 million over the past five years, but in 1998 it should break even for the first time with a turnover of more than £3 million. He has high hopes for a series of major costume dramas based on the popular Inspector Pitt novels written by Anne Perry. The first, *The Cat in the Hat*, was shown on ITV last year.

The Prince's career path, however, has been strewn with problems. When he left his Scottish public school, Gordonstoun, it was as head boy with four creditable A levels.

Three years at Cambridge followed, where his great interest became drama. Despite that, he followed his brothers into the Services in 1986 and joined the Royal Marines, where he was to stay for seven months.

His love of the theatre later led him to become a production assistant with Andrew Lloyd-Webber's Really Useful Theatre Company. He left two years later to set up a production company before founding Ardent with his close friend Eben Foggitt in December 1993.

The Prince, like his brothers, sister and cousins, is no longer on the Civil List, but receives £96,000 a year from the Queen to run his private office. Compared with some other members of his family, he carries out relatively few royal engagements. He is a trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and he is patron of a string of orchestras and theatres.

The Prince has taken out a 50-year lease on Bagshot Park, Surrey, from the Crown Estate. The property's red-brick residence, set on 50 acres and formerly occupied by the Duke of Connaught, Queen Victoria's third son, is to be his marital home.



Prince Edward's television company, Ardent, is based at Bagshot Park in Surrey, where the couple will live

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Secret documents reveal grand imperial design, reports Richard Ford

He recommended the creation of a west African federation based on Nigeria and Ghana, a central African federation based on Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, and an east African federation based on Kenya and Uganda.

He wrote that there would be immense difficulties, but that there had been similar problems during the invasion of Normandy in 1944. "There will be many people in the UK who will oppose such a plan on



His report said that "brains and go-getters" were needed to help in the development of Africa. It said there was a marked lack of men of ability in the African colonies. His re-

Montgomery advised the Secretary of State for the Colonies that there was no time to lose and that those who opposed him should be "eliminated ruthlessly" and others who

But the report was received coolly by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, who said Montgomery had greatly exaggerated the minerals on the continent. He said Africa was not an "undiscovered El Dorado." "It is a poor continent which can only be developed at great expense of money and effort."

After receiving the Secretary of State's objections, Montgomery wrote: "It is obvious we disagree fundamentally on the whole subject. Time will show which of us is right."

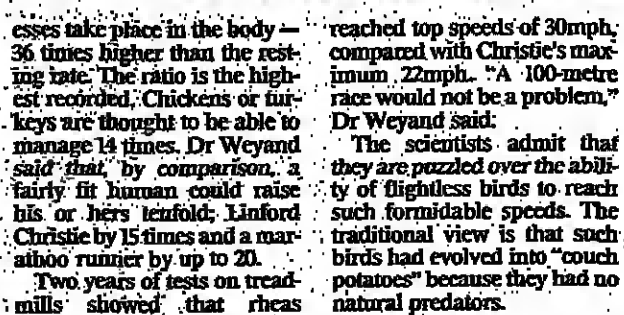


He helped the two crew to try to pump out the engine room but then realised that the boat was about to roll over. He and

"The winch operator lifted them just enough to get them off the side of the boat and into the water. I swam over and managed to get the strop on the man properly." The three were treated for shock and the effects of swallowing diesel.

BY NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

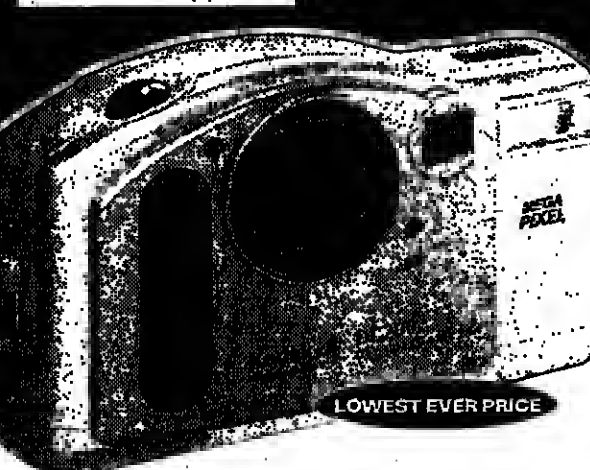
Tests, described in *Nature*, showed that the bird could raise its metabolic rate — the speed at which chemical proc-



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Baby killers 'hidden by cot death cloak'

BABY killers are able to go undetected because coroners are too ready to accept that a child has been a victim of cot death, according to an expert on infant deaths.

Professor Sir Roy Meadow examined 81 cases of children killed by parents and found that 49 of the babies had originally been certified as having died of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). A further 29 were certified with another cause of natural death.

Sir Roy, head of the department of paediatric and child health at St James's University Hospital, Leeds, has often been asked by police to help to investigate infant deaths and he has based his study on notes taken of cases over 18 years. He found that, in 24 cases, more than one baby in a family had died and, in one case, four babies died before the mother came under suspicion.

Writing in *Archives of Child Health*, published today, Sir Roy argues that "SIDS has been used, at times, as a pathological diagnosis to evade awkward truths". He suggests that it would be better if official use of the term were discontinued.

"Nobody doubts that there

Ian Murray reports on the child health expert who says the awkward truth is being evaded

are many different causes of death for children categorised as SIDS and yet we continue to use the term as a diagnostic category and to discuss it as a single disease entity.

"We should be honest and admit that we do not know and, above all, we should be angry and intent on preventing so many young children dying suddenly and unexpectedly early in life."

He says that, as the number of cot deaths has fallen to below 400 a year because of better preventive measures, it should now be possible to organise a multidisciplinary confidential inquiry into every unexpected child death.

"It is a national scandal," he says. "If one out of every thousand 21-year-olds died suddenly and unexpectedly without an identifiable cause, there would be a national outcry."

His notes of the 81 cases make it clear that there is a pattern of baby killing and that

an inquiry would make it possible to identify those who are likely to kill again. It should also have been possible, with better care, to have recognised potential killers and so prevented the death of many of the babies.

Babies certified as cot-death cases included those who were found to have swallowed balls of paper, coins and, in one case, a mitten. Two had fractured skulls, one a broken arm and many had bruising.

He found that more than half the babies had been examined by a doctor in the week before they died and were found to be healthy. They included 43 children who had been on children's wards only the week before they were killed. In 15 cases the baby was discharged in the morning and died at home in the evening.

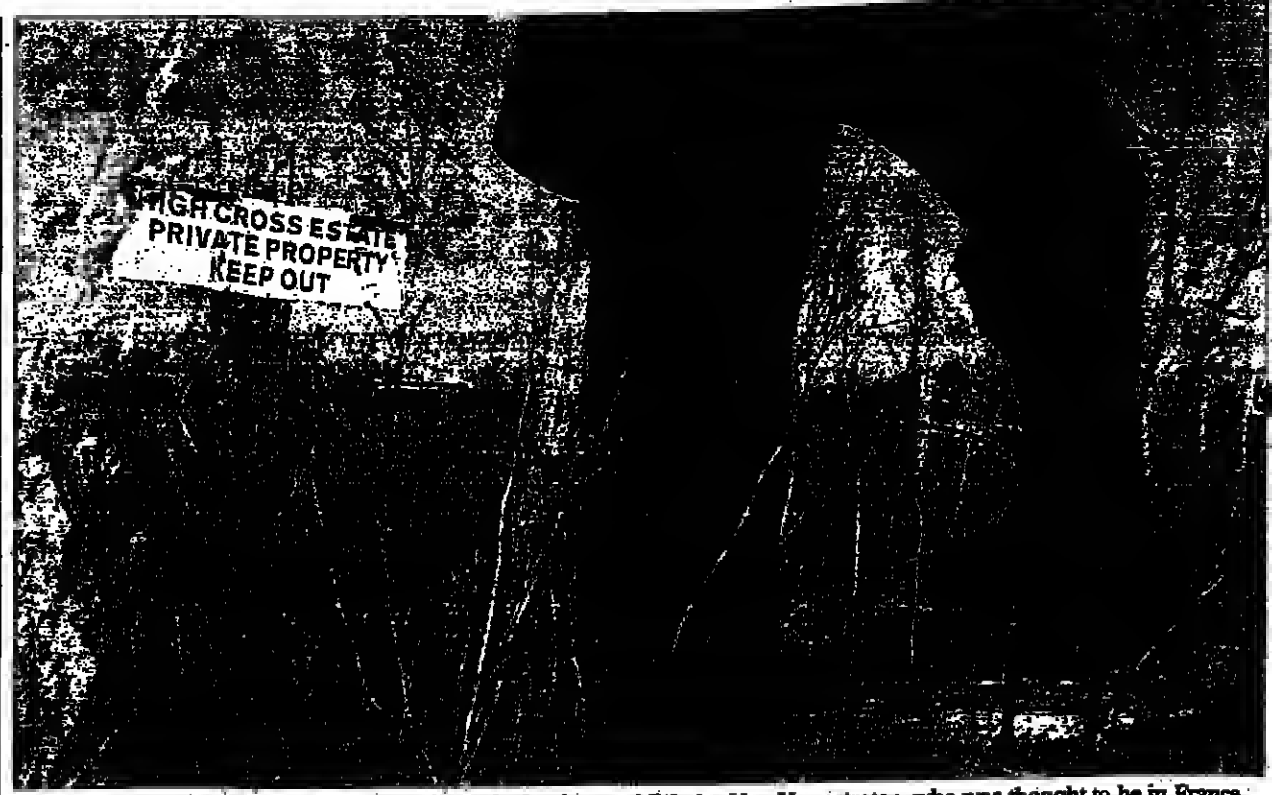
In seven cases the death was "foreseen" by the parent, who predicted to others the day on which the child would die. On

another four occasions the baby died on the anniversary of a previous sibling's death.

Sir Roy's case notes showed that most of the children had been born to mothers who had not had previous live babies. For the 14 parents who had an older child living, 12 of those children were considered to have been abused.

Most of the babies had been killed by their mothers, who had smothered or choked them. Most of the women smoked and belonged to disadvantaged families with no regular income. Half of them had a history of a fantasising disorder, such as Munchausen's syndrome.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths said that it had always acknowledged that some unnatural deaths were being erroneously recorded as cot deaths, but it was unfair to exacerbate parents' pain by automatically raising suspicion. The foundation agreed with the idea of comprehensive investigation into all sudden infant deaths, and would prefer the term SIDS to be used consistently and correctly rather than abandoned.



A ramblers set out on footpath No 9, defying the landowner Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, who was thought to be in France

One small step down path of protest

A MUDDY and overgrown footpath that has been blocked by a millionaire landowner was the scene of a very civilised protest yesterday (Adrian Lee writes).

With orders from organisers not to make a nuisance of themselves and to mind the brambles, ramblers con-

verged on the home of Nicholas Van Hoogstraten to walk the disputed route.

Its owner's descriptions of ramblers as "riff raff" and "the great unwashed" have made him a symbol of the hundreds of unresolved disputes between property owners and walkers throughout

Britain. The protesters admit that the route in question, footpath No 9 at Framfield, East Sussex, is rather unremarkable, but the 50 ramblers who congregated there were determined to assert their right to walk it.

Mr Van Hoogstraten, 51, first blocked the path nine years ago, and later built an ugly, corrugated metal barn across it. Jack Dunn, 82, the local footpath secretary for Framfield parish, said that there should be an understated protest against such obstruction, but "there is no need for us to resort to violence — or even bad language".

Shortly after 11am, the ramblers, various dogs and six policemen set off in sunshine

and clinging mud into the woods, over a bridgeless stream and across a boggy field. They were uninterrupted, and word had it that the enemy had gone to one of his other properties in the South of France.

The Ramblers Association, which organised the demonstration, said the path was part of 12,500 miles of public highway blocked by landowners in England. Sussex, with the South Downs and coastal trails, is not short of walking tracks, and footpath No 9 would usually attract only a handful of locals each year. Now notorious, it will be a target for future ramblers action. "It is on our list," said one. "We will do this twice a year to make our point."

Ministers still keen to avoid legislation

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is still hoping to secure greater public access to privately owned countryside without resort to compulsory measures.

Alan Meale, a junior Environment Minister, said yesterday: "We are striving to get a series of voluntary agreements and arrangements with the land-owning community. We believe that is the best course we should follow."

His remarks come after the recent disclosure in *The Times* that the Department of the Environment was disappointed with the result of consultations with landowners and was again considering legislation to force landowners to allow the right to roam.

Despite the lack of progress, Mr Meale told 450 farmers and food industry representatives at the annual Oxford Farming Conference that the Government was still hoping that legislation would not be necessary.

"His comments were warmly welcomed by the Country Landowners' Association. Ian MacNicol, the president, said: "This is the first time I have heard a minister spell out so

clearly the Government's preference for a voluntary approach. If we can make the voluntary route work, that is terrific work."

But Mr Meale, who said that details of the access scheme would be unveiled soon, also told landowners that they could expect tough legal action if they would not agree to make sufficient amounts of land accessible to the public. "We have made it clear that if we do not get the degree of public access we require, then we will have to pursue primary legislation in this parliament. We hope we will not arrive at that situation."

"I have to say that if we go down the path of primary legislation, it would be very firm and wide-ranging. Let there be no doubt whatsoever about that." He said the Government wanted to ensure that new access was permanent and "provides certainty for users and land managers alike". The Ramblers Association, which has been campaigning for a legal right to roam, believes that landowners will only concede adequate access if compelled to do so by law.

Body clock has its own alarm bell

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A HORMONAL wake-up call may partly explain why some people can control the time they wake without the need for an alarm clock.

Researchers have discovered that levels of a natural body hormone rise sharply in the hour before someone expects to come round. Scientists at Lübeck University in Germany tested volunteers' patterns over three nights. Some nights they were told they were to be woken at 9am and on other nights at 6am. The researchers also "surprised" the 15 volunteers by waking them earlier than expected.

During the experiments, reported in *Nature*, the researchers measured levels of the hormones adrenocorticotropin and cortisol released from the adrenal and pituitary glands. Concentrations circulating in the bloodstream both rose steadily during sleep. But in the hour before someone expected to be woken, levels of adrenocorticotropin soared. In volunteers woken up before the anticipated time, levels of this hormone were about a third less.

Visual aid to quitting cigarettes

By CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

SMOKERS who have made a new year's resolution to quit are being invited to try a new weapon in their battle against addiction.

STOP! is a glossy magazine being backed by the Government and promises to help people to kick the habit by the power of entertainment. Spurred by the success of diet magazines, the Health Education Authority conducted research in 1996 and found that 35 per cent of Britain's 15 million smokers wanted to read a magazine about giving up.

At £1.75, less than a pack of ten cigarettes, it features articles by celebrities such as Anne Robinson and the actress Dervla Kirwan in which they recount their own experiences of giving up smoking. There are also features about products and techniques, quizzes and humorous stories from around the world about smoking. The magazine will also test new products.

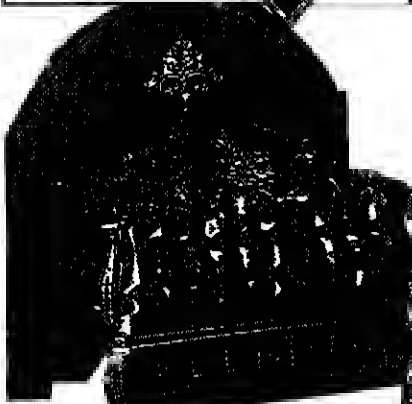
Nicola Willis, the Editor, said that it worked on the principle that if people were entertained they were more likely to remember the information and remain motivated by it.

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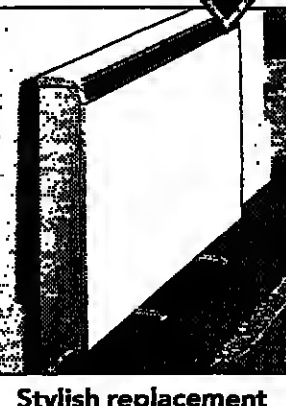
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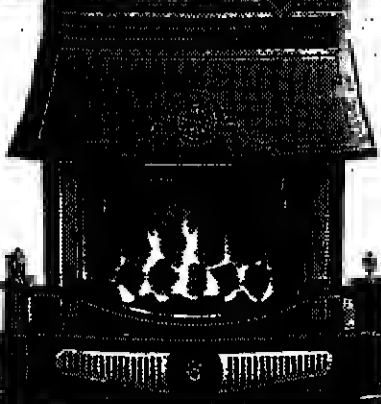
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Intensive care units 'refuse 1 in 5 patients'

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

INTENSIVE care units in Britain are fuller and have sicker people in them than anywhere else in the world, according to Paul Lawler, president of the Intensive Care Society.

Dr Lawler, who runs a 12-bed unit at South Cleveland Hospital in Middlesbrough, said that patients were having to be moved around a great deal to find an empty bed. He had admitted two patients over the weekend and now had no beds available to read-

mit one of his own patients who needed care.

"Intensive care units are refusing around 20 per cent of the patients being referred to them," he said. "In some cases this is because they are not ill enough. In a very small number of cases it is because they are so ill there is no point in putting them in an intensive care bed since they are not going to survive."

If there was no room for a seriously ill patient in one of the

unit's beds, the options were to leave them on the general ward or put them into a holding bed in an operating theatre recovery room until a bed became available. "Some patients were kept in recovery rooms for up to 24 hours."

Moving a patient to another hospital was only undertaken as a last resort. "It means that you have to send the patient off in the ambulance with a doctor and a nurse. That means you derange a hospital, which already hasn't got the facilities to look after the patient. Two members of staff who are needed to look after other patients. You don't move unless you are at the end of your tether and the fact that so much of it is going on at the moment shows how desperate the situation is."

"Intensive care in this country is in crisis at the moment. Nobody can deny that because of all the transfers that are going on."

He said that, because last winter was so mild, managers should have been prepared for the rush of extra patients this year. "The problem with intensive care beds was predictable, but unfortunately too little was done in time. The lead-in time to open a bed is up to three months. Extra facilities should have been put in last October, when the first evidence of a looming problem appeared."

Julian Bion, an anaesthetist

at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, and the British representative on the European Council of Intensive Care Management, said the shortage of beds meant patients were often referred to intensive care units too late.

"There are very severe problems at present, made worse by the fact that nurses are getting flu. We are functioning in an environment where we have just enough resources for the sickest patients for part of the time."

"We are very close to the edge and we are getting pushed over the edge by the in-

creasing number of emergencies. A lot of people are in wards who should be in intensive care and a lot are being discharged from intensive care into the wards far too soon."

"There is no question that a lot of patients should be referred to intensive care earlier and the reason this is not happening is that there just are no beds. They often are only referred when their condition has deteriorated to a point where it takes a great deal more to save their lives."

The growing pressure on intensive care beds was caused in part by the growth of major

operation procedures, including transplants. There were also more people being treated who would have not been in the past. "If you had an 80-year-old with an acute cardiac arrest, in the past he would have been allowed to die. Now he is brought into an intensive care unit, treated and sent back to the ward, where he dies two weeks later. Society must decide who we must treat and for how long."

Deborah Dawson, head of nursing at the intensive care unit at the Royal Sussex Hospital in Brighton, said that it was impossible to keep a full com-

plement of 50 nurses needed to run the seven-bed unit. "There is such pressure on the nurses that, as soon as they get to the point where they are qualified to work unsupervised in the unit, they leave. They can get more money working for an agency and don't have to put up with the same hours."

"The consequence is we are always about three nurses short and having to recruit juniors to do the work. That puts an extra strain on the others, who have to monitor what they are doing all the time."

Leading article, page 23



£100,000

Cost of first bed with monitoring equipment; subsequent beds sharing apparatus cost £20,000 each

£250,000

Minimum annual cost of 24-hour staffing of 1 bed

£50,000

Annual cost of drugs

£50,000

Annual cost of disposable equipment: tubes, bandages etc

£10,000

Annual depreciation of a bed and equipment over its ten-year life expectancy

Patient is flown 150 miles to nearest free bed

By ALEX O'CONNELL

AN ELDERLY man with breathing problems had to be flown 150 miles to hospital by an RAF helicopter because there was no room in intensive care units near his home.

The man was referred to a medical assessment unit at Hemel Hempstead Hospital, Hertfordshire, late on Saturday by his GP. He was complaining of a chest infection and the doctors decided that he needed to be put on a ventilator. They then discovered that the nearest available bed was at the Musgrove Park General Hospital in Taunton, Somerset.

A Sea King helicopter was sent from its Suffolk base and the patient was picked up for his 90-minute ride to Taunton. A spokesman at the Hemel Hempstead Hospital said: "Doctors agreed that the best course of action was to transfer the patient to the nearest available intensive care bed in Taunton. Financial considerations were secondary to that." The patient was now in a comfortable position.

The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Ambulance Service said that the bill for the transfer could run to £5,000. Steve Jones, the spokesman, confirmed that the service had taken patients in his patch as far as Gloucester, Warwick and Lincoln in the past few weeks.

Another hospital, the Southampton General, faced the prospect this week of sending one patient to Yorkshire, 250 miles away, when they had only one intensive care bed left. Belinda Atkinson, its critical care director, said: "We fortunately did not have to transfer anyone. If it was ever in the best interest of the patient we would move them. But we would always try to look nearer home."

The night before, two patients had to be removed from the general adult intensive care unit of the Southampton General to make way for more urgent cases. One of the patients was moved to Bournemouth, the other endured an ambulance journey of about 125 miles to a hospital in Torbay, Devon.

Flu victims told to stop ringing 999

By TIM JONES

FLU sufferers were urged yesterday to stay away from surgeries and to stop calling the emergency services.

John Chisholm, chairman of the GPs' committee of the British Medical Association, said that in nearly all cases, doctors were unable to help.

Dr Chisholm said that the crisis facing hospitals was exacerbated by a small number of people who dialled 999 when all they had was flu. "There is nothing a doctor can do to cure uncomplicated flu and people should help themselves."

He said that sufferers should

take plenty of rest, drink lots of fluid and use paracetamol or aspirin to lower their body temperatures. He urged the public, particularly the elderly, to have flu injections and reduce the risk of infection.

Criticising those who rang 999, he said: "Naturally, hospitals err on the side of caution and sometimes keep a flu sufferer brought by ambulance in overnight for observation, depriving a more seriously ill patient from having a bed." Other sufferers were walking into accident and emergency departments and increasing waiting times.

"Intensive care in this country is in crisis at the moment. Nobody can deny that because of all the transfers that are going on."

He said that, because last winter was so mild, managers should have been prepared for the rush of extra patients this year. "The problem with intensive care beds was predictable, but unfortunately too little was done in time. The lead-in time to open a bed is up to three months. Extra facilities should have been put in last October, when the first evidence of a looming problem appeared."

Julian Bion, an anaesthetist

Emergency team searches for beds around the clock

By ALEX O'CONNELL

STAFF at the Emergency Bed Service work frantically around the clock to match seriously ill patients with the country's few available intensive care beds.

A team of beary-eyed admissions officers in an airless southeast London office make constant calls to hospitals to find patient space. As they toil beneath giant maps of the country and laminated boards dis-

playing continually updated hospital vacancy figures, the room looks more like a war cabinet bunker than the headquarters for a national hospital bed search. None of the admissions staff wish to be identified for fear of receiving direct calls from desperate patients.

One officer, who has worked at the unit for two years, said: "In the last week, it has been particularly difficult getting spaces for intensive care patients. The calls have been

coming in thick and fast over the last couple of days with lots of people with chest infections and pneumonia needing acute and intensive care."

Another said that it would not be unusual for a London patient to travel to Manchester for an intensive care bed.

Graham Hayter, the general manager of the EBS, said: "There are transfers taking place which a lot of hospitals would say were outside

their area. With intensive care we are worried that there are only a few beds available to us."

"We are keeping a close watch and are effectively saying to hospitals when they ring us that their chances of getting a bed for a patient that they need to transfer are less good than at other times."

The EBS predates the NHS and was set up in 1938 by the King's Fund. The 34 operational staff assist with acute emergency referral

into London hospitals and operate the National Intensive Care service, which has been in place for two years. The EBS is funded by London health authorities, and the NIC also receives money from the Health Department.

"It is important to remember that an intensive care space is not just about the bed, it is about organising the right level of care for that patient," Mr Hayter said.

Permanent intensive care units

were a British invention, but now we fall behind every developed country except for Greece in providing the money to run them. The average British hospital can only spare 3 per cent of its income on intensive care, while German hospitals spend 9 per cent and American hospitals at least 10 per cent.

There currently are about 1400 such beds in Britain, about 300 of which are dedicated to paediatric care.

LAURA ASHLEY

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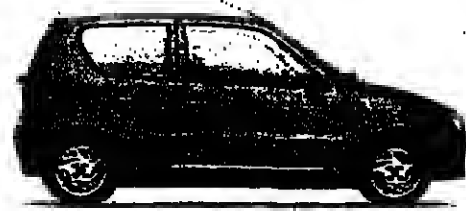
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GEOGRAPHERS' CONFERENCE

Bus lanes alone 'will not shift Mondeo man'

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE Government's plan to shift people out of cars and on to public transport is unlikely to succeed without much greater investment, the geographers' conference at Leicester University said yesterday.

Richard Knowles, of Salford University, said that partnerships between bus companies and local authorities to make bus travel more attractive — a cornerstone of the Government's policy — had produced very little evidence of a significant change in habits.

Of 65 such schemes, known as Quality Partnerships, only three had shown clear evidence that "Mondo Man" would give up his car, Dr Knowles said. Bus use had increased in most cases by only a little and no studies had been done to find out where the extra passengers had come from.

"They could be people who used to walk, or they could be people who always travelled by bus but who are now making more journeys," he said. "We simply don't know."

An exception was a scheme in Ipswich, Super Route 66, where a section of road has

been segregated for buses, which run between raised kerbs. A study has shown a 42 per cent increase in use, a quarter of the extra passengers coming from cars.

Most Quality Partnership schemes were too small and unambitious. Dr Knowles told the Royal Geographical Society—institute of British Geographers' conference. They could involve bus lanes, bus priority at traffic lights, new buses, more frequent services, better bus shelters and information systems, or park-and-ride facilities. But the average length of new bus lanes introduced per partnership was 210 metres, too short to make any significant difference to the speed of bus travel.

"These taken-custody bus lanes are a waste of money," he said. "Comprehensive upgrades are needed, including route segregation, as in Ipswich, but these are much more expensive." The Ipswich scheme, involving a single route into the city, cost £2.3 million, while a typical Quality Partnership scheme cost £150,000 to £250,000.

Another successful scheme,

at Scott Hall Road in Leeds, produced a 40 per cent rise in bus usage, but no measurement was made to show how many of the passengers had switched from cars. The same is true of one of the most ambitious schemes, the Edinburgh Greenways system involving five routes where the road is coloured green and restricted to buses, taxis and cyclists.

The first two phases of that scheme cost £7.5 million, and speeded up bus travel so that it now takes eight and a half minutes less to travel by bus into the city centre from its western edge than by car. The scheme is claimed to have increased passengers by 250,000 a year.

Dr Knowles concluded: "The Government's new integrated transport policy has the potential to make a substantial net public-sector capital investment in public transport needed to encourage significant numbers of car drivers and passengers to switch to public transport. Evidence is limited as to whether Quality Partnerships can either attract significant numbers of car users or reverse the long decline in bus ridership."



Women bankers pay family price

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

WOMEN who climb the management ladder in banking pay for their success by having fewer children, unlike their counterparts in the equally male-dominated profession of medicine.

The difference, according to Professor Rosemary Crompton, of the University of Leicester, lies in the control the women can exert over their lives. Doctors can plan their careers around child-bearing, whereas managers have to tailor theirs to

suit their employers. She found the same pattern in five countries — Britain, France, Norway, the Czech Republic and Russia — studied as part of a survey funded by the Economic and Social Science Research Council. She told the conference that the results indicated that the key question for career women was the same as it had always been: who will look after the children? It was unnecessary to resort to arguments about the "gender nature" of particular jobs to explain why women did not do them.

The numbers of women in both medi-

cine and banking management are rising. For the study, 15 women doctors and 15 women in banking, all aged between 30 and 50, were interviewed in each of the five countries. In Britain, only half the bankers had started a family and only three had more than one child. All but one of the doctors was a mother and most had more than one child.

Professor Crompton said: "There have been a lot of claims recently that men are responsible for holding women back. I am not saying that it is not a valid point, but childcare is the bottom line."

Rail firm surveys are condemned as useless

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

RAIL companies were criticised yesterday for carrying out surveys that are "misleading" and "close to useless". Britain's 25 train firms have been forced to conduct surveys every six months to gauge passenger opinion on the quality of service.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, has already demanded a shake-up of the way that train operators conduct surveys, calling for questions to be vetted more closely by John O'Brien, the Rail Franchising Director.

formation given on delayed and cancelled trains. Four firms did not produce survey results because they were among the last to be privatised.

Even train companies owned by the same rail group ask questions about differing

The Railway Forum, the rail industry's umbrella organisation, conceded that some of the criticisms in the report were well-founded. 'A spokesman said that it was taking time to improve services after decades

Helen Parker, editor of *Which?*, said: "The rail companies' current passenger surveys are close to useless. They should be the responsibility of regulators, not the companies."

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PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY: ☐ executive failings ☐ clumsy doctors ☐ humour in uniform

Stress test shows up dark side of the boss

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PSYCHOLOGISTS have developed a test that companies can use to discover if their senior managers have a hidden 'dark side'.

Executives taking the 20-minute test are asked to give True/False or Yes/No answers to 168 simple questions, such as: Do you feel that you are ambitious? Are you confident taking in front of a group of people? Do you feel that you are witty and entertaining?

Testers claim not only to be able to identify a manager's strengths from the results, but also to predict whether these good points might ultimately lead to their downfall under stress. A person who is self-confident in normal conditions may become arrogant under stress and overestimate their capabilities. Somebody who is normally shrewd and a good judge of character may become distrustful and paranoid. A cautious person may be reluctant to take risks, while somebody who is diligent may become compulsive and obsessed with orderliness.

Geoff Trickey, a psychologist with the Kent-based Psychological Consultancy Ltd, which has introduced the test to Britain from America, told the British Psychological Society, meeting in Blackpool, that, unlike most conventional recruitment tests, which aim to demonstrate how people perform under normal conditions, the new test is designed to predict how they will act in conditions of stress.

He said: "It is designed to expose individuals who are most likely to flip, lose control or exhibit other types of counter-productive behaviour at times of stress that may make them impossible to work with."

The test, devised by the American management expert Bob Hogan, is particularly difficult to cheat at because the questions encourage people to highlight their strengths. To catch out any potential fraudsters, a "validity scale" is included that comprises a series of questions that 99 per cent of the general population could be expected to answer in the same way. It includes questions such as: "I have never unknowingly told a lie - true or false?" Anybody who answered "True" to such a question would be placed under suspicion.

Mr Trickey said that, although he had not subjected Tony Blair to the test, he believed the Prime Minister would emerge as a vivacious/dramatic character type. "He wants to be the centre of attention all the time, but there is a high chance that he could become dramatic and grab any chance to put on an emotional display of himself. People like this are not remotely interested in others as people, but are interested in using others as an audience. Once they have got people listening to them, what they are actually saying is all superficial."

President Clinton would probably be of the same type as Mr Blair, Mr Trickey said. He suggested that Peter Mandelson, the former Trade and Industry Secretary, would rate as charming/manipulative. "It does not matter if you are manipulative as long as you are able to be charming too. But when the charm goes under stress, then people no longer trust you and they won't follow you any more."

Mr Trickey and his colleagues, Gillian Hyde and Emma Greig, told the conference that the purpose of the test was not to persuade companies to recruit only bland people. It could, however, be useful in identifying a need for training or for raising self-awareness. For those unable to afford the time or cost of the formal test, Mr Trickey suggested a simpler alternative. "You get very similar results from watching how people behave when they drive their car. You may find yourself swearing at elderly people, although you wouldn't dare speak to them like that if you bumped into them in a lift."



Testing trio: Emma Greig, left, Geoff Trickey and Gillian Hyde say the American-devised test for senior managers is virtually cheat-proof

NET LINKS

<http://www.ccl.org> The Centre for Creative Leadership
<http://www.hoganassessments.com> Hogan Assessment Systems (Bob Hogan's company)
<http://www.bps.org.uk> The British Psychological Society

Computer reveals the sharpest surgeons

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

A COMPUTER test to identify doctors who are unlikely to possess the exceptional skill needed for keyhole surgery was unveiled at the conference yesterday.

Keyhole surgery is increasingly popular when the National Health Service because it involves less-invasive procedure and shorter recovery times, thus cutting hospital waiting lists. But it demands unusual personal skills: surgeons effectively work by remote control and have to master unusual

hand-eye co-ordination techniques. Some surgeons are simply too clumsy.

Assessing trainees has, until now, been extremely fraught, with shortcomings being discovered only after a lot of expensive training or, at worst, after an operation has gone wrong.

The computer-based test, devised by a team led by Professor Dave Barrigan, of the SME Group in Hull, should help to overcome this problem. In the test, trainees have to trace around shapes on a computer screen. Their dexterity, accuracy and speed and spatial ability are all measured. The researchers say

that the test, which does not require experience of keyhole surgery, has proved to be a good predictor of fine motor control and of a person's performance when learning the procedures.

Trainee barristers from ethnic minorities are three times more likely to fail certain tests than whites, according to a study published yesterday.

Chris Dewberry, a lecturer at Birkbeck College, London, said that a study of trainee barristers who took the Bar Vocational Course in 1992-96 showed that performance in the examination

was greatly influenced by the type of university trainees had attended and previous academic performance.

Candidates from ethnic minorities were more likely to have attended a "new" university rather than an older establishment such as Oxford or Cambridge and to have had poorer degree results.

Mr Dewberry told the conference that the findings could explain the relatively poor performance of ethnic minorities and other social groups in the workplace, as well as on training programmes.

Make 'em laugh to make output rise

The secret of increased productivity lies in managers' ability to be more humorous, a psychologist suggested yesterday. In a study of 50 air cadets, humour was identified as the most important quality in a leader, ahead of intelligence. The research was conducted by Howard Taylor, the head of psychology at Buckinghamshire Chilterns University in High Wycombe. He said that it carried serious implications for industry. Productivity could increase if managers used humour when they dealt with workers. "You could call it the humanisation of managers," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gulf man's cancer was 'natural'

A coroner has rejected a claim by the family of a former Intelligence Corps sergeant that radiation from satellite communications equipment used during the Gulf War caused the rare cancer that killed him. The rapid sarcoma on the forehead of Andrew Ross, 33, of Kirkheaton, West Yorkshire, was diagnosed two weeks before his death in April 1997. Roger Whitaker, the coroner, investigated the dangers of radiation and the possibility of exposure to materials such as Agent Orange, but recorded a verdict of natural death.

Ben test negative

The family of Ben Needham, who vanished on the island of Kos in 1991 aged 21 months, have been told that a look-alike boy spotted in Greece is not their son. DNA tests on a strand of hair grabbed by a tourist proved negative.

Threat to Tube

Fresh industrial action on London Underground moved a step closer after the main rail union, the RMT, decided to ballot its members over job security, redundancies and changes to employment conditions.

Bosnia pilot dies

An army pilot injured when a helicopter crashed in Bosnia has died, a month after his marriage. Corporal Chris Addis, 26, was among three crew on the Lynx killed when it plunged into a minefield near Gornji Vakuf last month.

In a royal spin

A royal warrant has been awarded to the Prince of Wales's laundry, The Anton Laundry, in Andover, Hampshire, uses environmentally friendly methods. It won the contract for the Prince's home, Highgrove, five years ago.

Binmen win

Four dustmen sacked for collecting too much rubbish won a claim for unfair dismissal. Torbay council in Devon dismissed them for taking commercial as well as domestic waste. A tribunal said they had not done so for financial gain.

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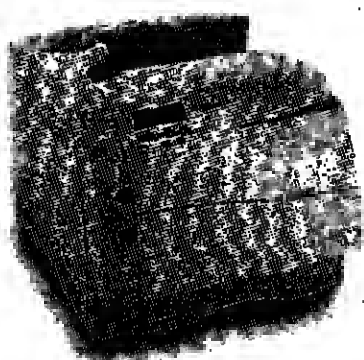
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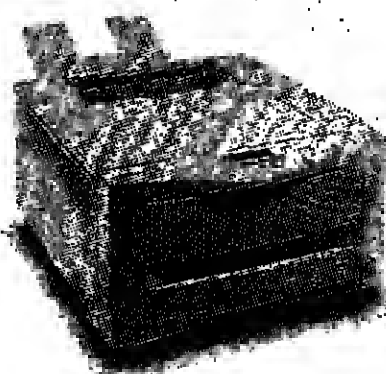
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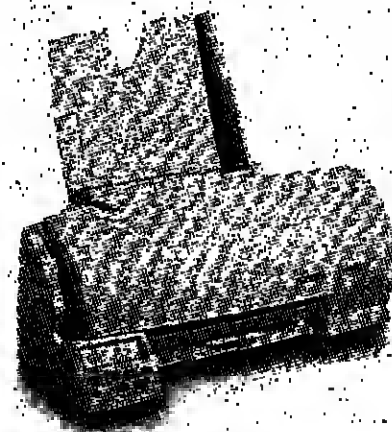
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مركز أمن المعلومات

Yemen stalls Yard's inquiry into kidnap

FOUR Scotland Yard detectives were last night struggling to carry out their investigation into the group behind the kidnapping of 16 western tourists as Yemeni authorities continue to hinder their inquiries.

The Yard's Anti-Terrorist Squad officers and ten FBI agents are being followed everywhere they go in the Yemeni capital. They are forbidden to talk to people about the kidnappings by the al-Jihad group or the series of bomb plots uncovered in Yemen.

The FBI and Yard teams must spend most of the day in their hotel and inform Yemen's Political Security Organisation of their whereabouts at all times. Local security chiefs fear that the detectives may uncover links with international terrorist groups that are rumoured to have connections to Yemen.

Diplomats were demanding last night that Sanaa keep its original promise to let the investigators question Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang, whom authorities plan to execute soon.

They also want to see three men arrested in Aden, who allegedly confessed to plotting

Police from Britain and the US are being hampered by the authorities, reports Daniel McGrory in Sanaa

bomb attacks on a series of targets there, which included the British Consulate and an Anglican church.

Yemeni officials say that two of the men, of Pakistani origin, had planned the bombings of five American and British targets from their base in London.

All three claim to be British

citizens. British diplomats want to check the UK passports the three were using to enter Yemen, but have still not seen the documents, nor been able to talk to them.

There were a series of urgent meetings in Sanaa yesterday to try to rescue the inquiry into who funded and trained both the kidnappers and the al-

leged bombers, and the links believed to exist between the two groups.

One excuse given by Yemeni authorities for not allowing the police to see Hassan is that the 28-year-old refuses to talk to the Yard.

The strained relations with Whitehall worsened further yesterday after two detectives were expelled from Aden, and there are hints that Britain may impose diplomatic sanctions against Yemen. These could include a ban on visas for travel and a cutback in aid and investment.

Diplomats expressed concern last night for a party of 12 British tourists who had ignored Foreign Office advice and who were travelling along the road on which Hassan staged his ambush. Yemeni authorities withdrew military escorts from touring parties even after the discovery of the bomb plot in Aden on December 23, five days before the kidnap.

There is also growing irritation at how the Yemenis are conducting the hunt for the escaped kidnappers. Security forces did not raid Hassan's home village until five days



An American tourist watches an election rally in Sanaa, where British detectives are largely confined to their hotel.

after the botched hostage rescue.

Tribesmen from the village of al-Hajer, 180 kilometres north of Aden, said that known associates of Hassan left their hideouts in the mountains of Shabwa province hours after the surviving hos-

tages were freed. Security sources in Aden said that they had rounded up "a considerable number of suspects", but refused to say how many.

They also claimed to have shut down the al-Jihad's main training camp at Hatai, but residents of the remote moun-

tain town said that there had been no raid. Scotland Yard officers in London said that they did not know how long they were prepared to allow their detectives to stay in Yemen.

As efforts continued last night to repair the rift with Sanaa, the Labour MP Keith

Vaz said that a senior Cabinet figure should visit Yemen to resolve the crisis.

Mr Vaz, who was born in Aden, said that he would be willing to go to Sanaa to help to obtain permission for the Yard officers to conduct their inquiry.

Efforts to uncover truth expose a rift that stems from civil war

A CLEAR rift has opened up between the Yemeni Government and the authorities in Aden over the investigation into the hostage killings.

The decision in Aden to expel two Scotland Yard detectives on Tuesday has exposed tensions between the authorities in the south and the Government in the capital, Sanaa. The confusion appears to reflect the lingering resentment in Aden and south Yemen to the Gov-

Aden's lingering resentment of north lies behind moves to hinder investigation, writes Michael Binyon

ernment in Sanaa, which defeated the breakaway south after a bitter two-month civil war in 1994.

Victor Henderson, the British Ambassador, yesterday had another round of talks with the Yemeni Interior Minister, who promised extensive co-operation.

The Foreign Office believes that the order expelling the two Scot-

land Yard officers from Aden was a mix-up, not reflecting government policy. But if the Aden authorities are defying the Interior Ministry's promise of help, this could make the official investigation into the killings impossible.

Officially the Scotland Yard detectives in Sanaa have been told that they can return to Aden when-

ever they want and interview whomever they wish.

The Foreign Office yesterday dismissed as ridiculous reports that they might not be allowed to interview the suspects because they are Muslims. "In any case, we too have Muslim police," a spokesman said.

A bigger complication comes

with reports that some of the suspects may hold British passports, which would entitle them to a visit and British consular advice. If they also held Yemeni citizenship, however, Britain would have no consular right to see them.

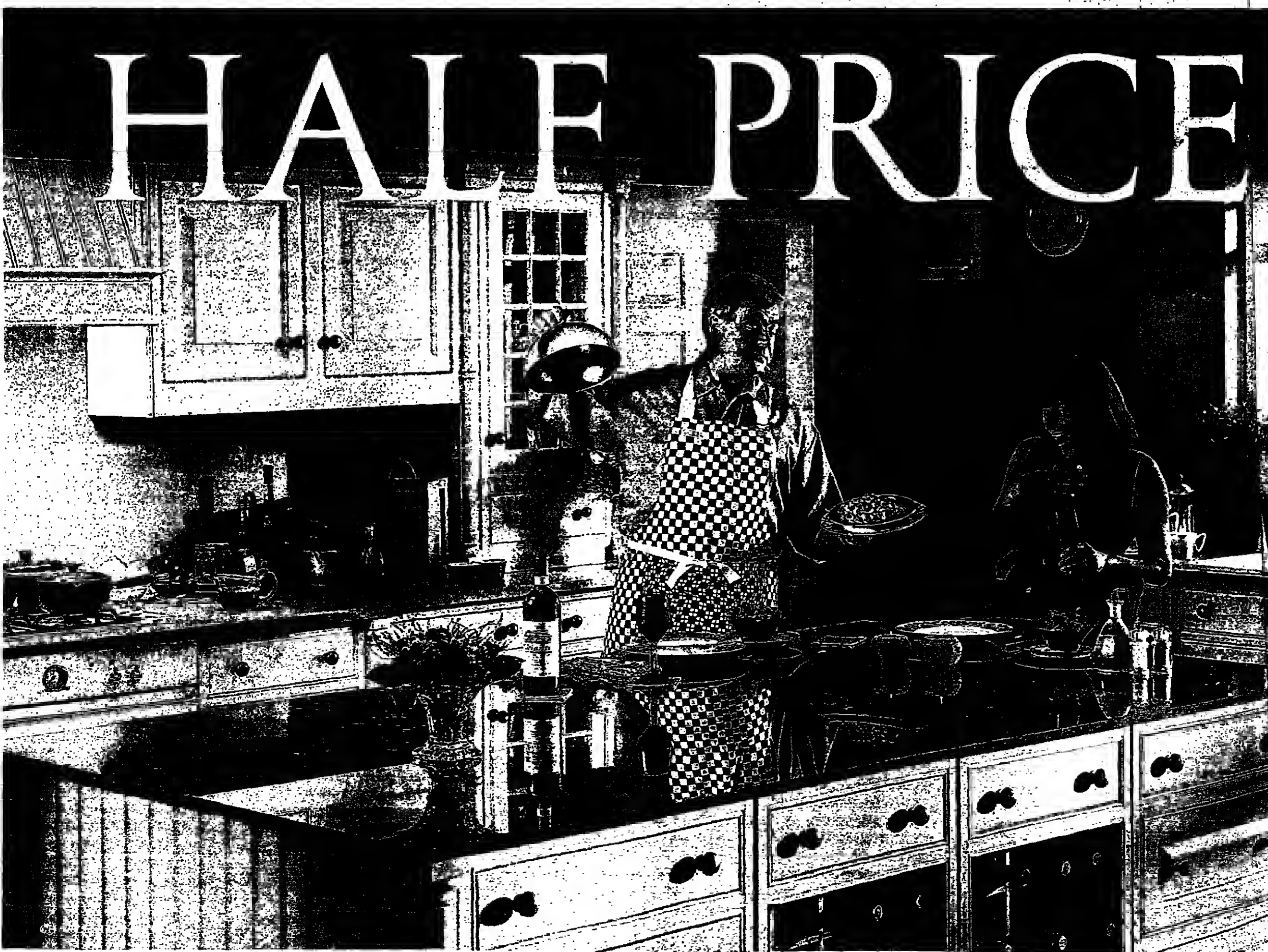
About 2,000 people are believed to hold British passports in Yemen, most of them Yemenis with

dual nationality. The Foreign Office said it was still unclear who the kidnappers were or what were their motives. "They could be connected to outside powers and people such as Osama bin Laden, or this could be purely a local tribal affair," a spokesman said.

Mr Henderson was cordially received yesterday by Yemeni offi-

cials, who still say they are keen for Britain to establish the full facts of the case.

The British Embassy in Sanaa while denied any change in policy towards Yemen's attempt to join the Commonwealth after the killing of the hostages. It issued a statement confirming that Yemen's request had been under review by all members of the Commonwealth since 1997.



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مركز ابن لعل

US 'used UN arms team to spy on Iraqis'

BY JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND MICHAEL BINYON

A FEUD between top United Nations officials and UN weapons inspectors broke into open warfare yesterday when aides to Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, accused the United States of misusing a UN intelligence-gathering system to spy on President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The allegations, echoing longstanding Baghdad complaints, focused on an electronic eavesdropping operation, codenamed "Shake the Tree", and established by the UN Special Commission (Unsc) in early 1996 to thwart Iraqi efforts to conceal weapons of mass destruction.

While Mr Annan was on holiday, unnamed aides were quoted as saying that he had "convincing evidence" that Unsc helped the Americans to collect intelligence to destabilise the Iraqi regime. "The Secretary-General has become aware of the fact that Unsc directly facilitated the creation of an intelligence col-

lection system for the US in violation of its mandate," one adviser told *The Washington Post*. "The UN cannot be party to an operation to overthrow one of its member states."

The charges appeared to be part of a bureaucratic battle over the future of weapons inspections after last month's US-British airstrikes on Iraq. They sparked a denial by Richard Butler, chief UN weapons inspector, and were disowned by Mr Annan's office. "We not only have no convincing evidence of these allegations, we have no evidence of any kind," said Mr Annan's spokesman.

"Shake the Tree" dates back to a 1996 decision by weapons inspectors to pursue the "concealment mechanism" by which Iraq's security services and elite military units hid components and documents for weapons programmes. UN inspectors set up electronic surveillance to monitor mobile phones and walkie-talkies. The system, originally run from the UN monitoring

centre in Baghdad, meant that inspectors learnt immediately of Iraq's evasion attempts. British and Israeli personnel helped to interpret data.

Scott Ritter, the former UN inspector who ran the "concealment" inspections, told *The Boston Globe* that "Shake the Tree" was run by Unsc until March 1998. Then, after Mr Annan negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with Saddam, the US pressed Britain and Israel to withdraw support and took over the operation. By last July the system had reportedly been automated so the US could monitor Iraqi communications after inspectors had left the country.

Mr Butler denied relinquishing control of "Shake the Tree" to America, and he rejected charges that Unsc was helping it to destabilise Iraq.

The 20,000-tonne British aircraft carrier *Invincible* will sail for the Gulf on Saturday to join British and US forces deployed there, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.



An Iraqi soldier, anticipating further airstrikes, mans an anti-aircraft gun in Basra

Fury at Israeli car clampdown

Jerusalem: Britain and Israel were involved in a diplomatic clash yesterday when Israeli police removed cars owned by Palestinian staff from outside the British consulate-general in east Jerusalem (Christopher Walker writes).

British officials made formal complaints to the Israeli Foreign Ministry. According

to British diplomats, three cars were seized from Palestinian and Israeli Arab staff employed at the consulate-general despite remonstrations from British officials.

The Israelis claim the cars will be sold unless their owners pay income tax owed to the Israeli authorities. British officials claimed

that the action was in breach of an informal agreement reached with Israel in March 1980, when it was decided that Palestinian employees at the various consulates in east Jerusalem would not have to pay taxes to a Government which most states, including Britain, regard as an occupying military force.



Lipkin-Shahak poll entry

Netanyahu faced with centre party challenge

Jerusalem: Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, the former Israeli Chief of Staff, yesterday announced his bid for Prime Minister as head of a new centre party that he said would create a "political revolution" in the Jewish state (Christopher Walker writes). In a

strong challenge to Benjamin Netanyahu, the present Prime Minister, Mr Lipkin-Shahak said his new party would replace the "entrenched and outmoded ideas" of the ruling right-wing Likud Party, and of Labour, which has been in opposition since 1996.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Pilot protest adds to Olympic woes

Athens: A work-to-rule by Olympic Airways pilots demanding regular overtime pay has cast a cloud over the airline's survival (John Carr writes). The management says routes may have to be cut to maintain basic operations. Earlier this week hundreds of Athens-bound passengers at Heathrow and Orly, Paris, turned as the work-to-rule added to delays. A London-Athens flight last Sunday overflew a scheduled stop at Salonika when the pilot refused to fly into overtime. On arrival at Athens, angry passengers who should have disembarked at Salonika, briefly confined the pilots in the cockpit.

19,000 flee rebel clash

Kabzi, Burundi: Clashes between rebels and government forces near the Burundian capital have left dozens of people dead and displaced nearly 19,000, officials said. Since fighting intensified early last month, all 10,932 residents of the Mubone commune, and 8,000 residents of the neighbouring Kabzi commune, have fled their homes. (AP)

Tasteless sweetmeats

Tel Aviv: Bags of confectionery containing portraits of Adolf Hitler and Nazi swastikas, right, are on sale in Israel, *Yediot Aharonot* reported. The Tofita sweets, imported from Turkey, come wrapped in portraits of dictators, including Hitler and Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. David Bisso, the importer, said that he had received complaints about the Hitler pictures from Nazi death camp survivors. (AFP)



Genocide films 'lost'

Phnom Penh: More than 1,000 hours of film that could help to frame genocide charges against Khmer Rouge leaders are missing and might have been sold, the head of Cambodia's genocide documentation centre said. The films comprise virtually the entire domestic archive of films made during the 1975-1979 Khmer Rouge regime. (Reuters)

32-year silence broken

Hanoi: Pain during an operation on his abscessed foot led Truong Van Xa, 32, to speak for the first time. Mr Xa, a deaf mute, had had a local anaesthetic, but when the doctor at Binh Dinh Provincial Hospital made an incision, he screamed, adding: "Oh my gosh, it's so painful." His vocabulary has grown since, but his hearing is still impaired. (AFP)

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Off-road cars come adrift in US snow

FROM GILES WHITTALL IN LOS ANGELES

AS THE death toll rises in the Midwest's great blizzard, misery has come even to the once-proud owners of gleaming four-wheel drive vehicles. The hottest American car had in years, "all-terrain" vehicles — used mainly as suburban run-arounds — have met their first real test of strength with Mother Nature. And they are floundering in snowdrifts by the thousand.

Chicago's worst blizzard in 30 years continued yesterday, with fresh layers falling on the 2ft of snow that has crippled the city since the weekend despite round-the-clock bulldozing by more than 700 snowploughs. Ninety-one deaths have been blamed on the

storm, and upwardly mobile professionals who thought themselves immune have been humbled by wrecked transmissions and broken axles in cars they thought would take them anywhere.

"We are in crisis mode and a big part of the problem is four-wheel drive owners who don't know what they're doing," a receptionist at the A-1 Towing Service in suburban Chicago said. Sport utility vehicles have flooded the US market over the past five years, generating huge profits for manufacturers and dealers and earning the fury of environmentalists because, as "light trucks", they are not subject to the same emissions standards as



Firemen in Buffalo, where more than a foot of snow fell yesterday, work to clear the city's streets and fire hydrants

smaller cars. European companies including Mercedes have joined a stampede led by Ford and Chevrolet to equip the family with machines that dwarf more traditional estate cars. They are sold as the perfect way to conquer the wilderness, often in leather-upholstered luxury.

Yet many owners have been left frustrated and out of pocket this week. Often it is the driver that is the problem. "A four-

wheel drive is not a tank, and even a tank can get stuck," Trent Riddle, Editor of a specialist off-road magazine told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Towing companies from Illinois to New York State were being called out by novices buried in snow. Even the mightiest names in the off-road business suffered casualties. One suburban Chicago dealership towed in a Range Rover and two Land Rovers

with transmissions burnt out because drivers kept spinning their wheels.

The blizzard blanketing much of the central United States has brought record temperatures from Detroit to Disney World in Florida. Most storm deaths have been in traffic accidents, but at least a dozen reported have been elderly people collapsing after shovelling snow.

The most poignant victim

was a still-born baby found in a snowdrift and frozen solid on the steps of a Chicago church.

Sixteen more inches of snow were expected in Buffalo, New York, yesterday — the unofficial snow capital of the United States. Further west, some air passengers have been stranded since New Year's Day because of chaos in the regional air hubs of Chicago and Detroit. For most, driving home has not been an option.

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Olympics chief hit by gifts scandal

FROM GILES WHITTALL IN LOS ANGELES

JUAN Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee and custodian of its good name, has fallen under the cloud of its latest bribery scandal amid claims that he received gifts worth six times the committee's self-imposed maximum.

In 1995, a week before the IOC awarded the 2002 Winter Olympics to Salt Lake City, Señor Samaranch received two Browning guns worth \$1,000 (£615), the Utah-based gunmaker has confirmed. Committee members may accept gifts from potential sponsors up to \$150 in value.

The twist in the Salt Lake City scandal involves tiny sums next to the \$400,000 in gifts that IOC members are said to have received in all, but it is the first involving Señor Samaranch directly and comes less than a month after he vowed to oust any colleague guilty of corruption.

Utah's 30-year-old dream of hosting the winter games is rapidly turning into a nightmare. What had been touted as a \$3 billion bonanza for the state is now the object of four separate corruption inquiries, including one by the FBI. This week Mike Leavitt, Utah's Republican Governor, issued a stinging rebuke to those who backed the Salt Lake City bid and are now accused of funneling perks to IOC members in return for their votes.

The Olympic movement's worst fear is that the Salt Lake City allegations may be exposed as the tip of an iceberg.



Ileana de la Guardia: father was executed

Castro is target of French lawsuit

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FIDEL CASTRO has joined General Augusto Pinochet of Chile as the target of international legal action after a French lawyer filed a lawsuit in Paris yesterday against the Cuban President, accusing him of crimes against humanity, torture, drug-trafficking and illegal detention.

Serge Lewisch, a lawyer, demanded that Señor Castro face prosecution for the 1989 execution by firing squad of a government official, Colonel Antonio de la Guardia, on charges of smuggling drugs to America.

Acting on behalf of De la Guardia's daughter, Ileana, M Lewisch claimed that the colonel was one of several scapegoats punished to deflect suspicion from Señor Castro himself during a drugs scandal. M Lewisch also accused President Castro of the arbitrary imprisonment of a French journalist and photographer in the 1970s.

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CHANGING TIMES

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£100m boost to Aids fight

FROM JILL SHERMAN
IN PRETORIA

A £100 million programme to fight Aids worldwide will be announced by Tony Blair tomorrow, the bulk of the funds destined for South Africa and other African countries.

The Prime Minister will give further details of the three-year British grant when he visits the Nazareth House Orphanage in Cape Town, where most of the children are HIV positive or have Aids.

Officials said the money would go towards the United Nations Aids Programme and to projects to help special victims such as those at Nazareth House. They said that there are now 33.4 million people infected with HIV in the world and that 70 per cent are in Africa.

More than 80 per cent of all deaths from Aids have occurred in Africa, and 10 per cent of existing and new cases now occur in South Africa where the disease has reduced life expectancy by 20 years.

Women between 15 and 25 are one of the highest risk groups, and without effective action soon there could be two million orphans infected with HIV in South Africa.

Blair backs Mbeki as heir apparent

Britain wants to reassure whites they are safe in the ANC's hands, Sam Kiley writes from Pretoria

TONY BLAIR hopes to boost the image of Thabo Mbeki among whites and big business during his first tour to South Africa this week.

Mr Mbeki, the anointed successor to Nelson Mandela, has sparked fears among many whites that they face an uncertain future after elections later this year.

Members of Mr Blair's entourage and British diplomats in Pretoria confirmed yesterday that Mr Blair hoped that his appearances alongside Mr Mbeki, and only a courtesy call on Mr Mandela, would "send a clear signal that we are confident about the transition".

"We are here to say to everybody, including the whites and all businessmen, that we think that South Africa is firmly on the right track. The appearance of the British Prime Minister alongside the Deputy President, Mr Mbeki, will send an unmistakable signal to those who might be considering leaving the country," said one official.

Mr Blair echoed these sentiments on the flight from his holiday in the Seychelles to Pretoria, where he landed yesterday at the start of his three-day tour of South Africa.

Britain is the country's largest trading partner, exporting £2.4 billion a year and importing £1.9 billion worth of South African products. In addition, Britain recently announced a £4 billion investment scheme

as part of a deal to sell arms to Pretoria.

There are clearly economic interests at the heart of the British delegation. But Mr Blair and his advisers have also recognised that Mr Mbeki, 57, a small, affable technocrat, has also recently "put the wind up whites" after twice stating that they enjoyed far too much of South Africa's wealth and had done very little to assist in the "transformation" of his country from an apartheid state to democracy.

Thabo is the son of Govan Mbeki, a fellow Robben Island prisoner and close friend of Mr Mandela. Thabo Mbeki went into exile in 1962, shortly before his father was jailed. He studied economics by correspondence with London University, and took an MA at Sussex University in 1966. By 1970 he was receiving military training in the Soviet Union, and was soon serving Oliver Tambo, the then ANC president, as his assistant, a break which swiftly took him on to the ANC's national executive.

Facing elections in May or June, Mr Mbeki's African National Congress has begun to try to turn voters' attention away from a failure to deliver on extravagant promises of social and economic improvements made five years ago to focus on racial issues. His ministers have insisted on racial quotas in national sports teams and pushed Bills through parliament requiring employers to reflect the racial profile of the country in their workforce.

Last year thousands of white professionals, and some of their black colleagues, joined an increasing brain drain of skilled workers leaving South Africa either because of crime, the most often cited reason, or because of a lack of faith in the long-term

goals of the ANC. They left at an average of about 800 a month.

"There is concern that South Africa's whites should not not be running away, but encouraging foreign investment. That is one of the reasons that Mr Blair has come to South Africa," a member of his staff said. Cementing firm relations between London and Pretoria has been seen as such a high priority that Downing Street openly refers to Mr Mbeki as the "President-in-waiting".

"There is no doubt that the ANC will win the next election, and no doubt that Mr Mbeki as the president of the party and Deputy President of the country, will be elected. It is therefore important for us to pay our respects to Mr Mandela, one of the great figures of the age, before he leaves office, and to cement the relationship with Mr Blair," a British official said.

Embassy protest: Tempers flared at a protest by right-wing Afrikaners at the British Embassy in Pretoria yesterday when demonstrators manhandled and insulted a lone British woman who was carrying a Union flag to show her support for Mr Blair's visit. She was uninjured. The demonstrators were demanding an apology from Britain for pain and suffering during the Anglo-Boer war of 1899 to 1902. (AFP)



Leading article, page 23

Cherie Blair is greeted by a child as she and Tony Blair arrived in South Africa yesterday

NET LINKS

www.anc.co.za/ — South African Independent online
www.anc.org.za/saenet.html — South African Internet Resources, many useful links including business, government and newspapers.
www.bhlm.com/sa/ — ANC news briefings, compilations from South African press agencies.

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UN staff flee rebel battle for heart of Freetown

PANIC gripped Sierra Leone's capital yesterday as rebels entered the city killing civilians suspected of being government supporters and bombing Nigerian-led west African peacekeeping troops defending President Kabbah.

The entire United Nations expatriate staff in Sierra Leone was reported last night to be at the airport awaiting evacuation to the Guinean capital, Conakry. Several government ministers were also present at Lungi airport, some 12 miles from Freetown, but said they did not intend to leave.

The rebels captured the State House, the symbolic seat of government. They also burned down the Nigerian High Commission, the city's main police station, and the special branch headquarters.

One unconfirmed report said prisoners, including scores of rebels, had been freed from the city's Pademba Road and New England prisons.

Sierra Leonean soldiers and forces of the Nigerian-led intervention force, Ecomog, that has been fighting the rebels were nowhere to be seen, witnesses said. The Government warned people to stay indoors. "Anybody found in the street from now on will be considered to be a rebel and shot," said Julius Spencer, Information Minister.

Gun battles and artillery volleys rang out through the city's abandoned streets. Reinforcements and additional supplies were being dispatched to Freetown from Nigeria, a Nigerian military official said on condition of anonymity.

Earlier in the day, thousands of people fled to the centre of Freetown after a two-hour barrage on the outskirts of the city. The civilians, fleeing on foot and in vehicles, retreated after the onset of firing from an industrial area about six miles from Freetown.

The rebel force, which has been accused of widespread atrocities, including the murder and torture of countless villagers, as well as cannibalism, launched a renewed offensive in December. It has swept through several towns in the east and north of the country since then.

Insurgents set capital ablaze, report Sam Kiley and Our Foreign Staff

President Kabbah was deposed in a coup in May 1997 by a military junta allied with the rebels. Soldiers from the intervention force restored him to power in February last year.

Since then, the insurgents have been rebuilding, strengthened by defections from Sierra Leone's military and mercenaries from Liberia. Among those who may have been freed from Freetown's prisons yesterday were members of the junta ousted last February, dozens of whom were sentenced to death on treason charges.

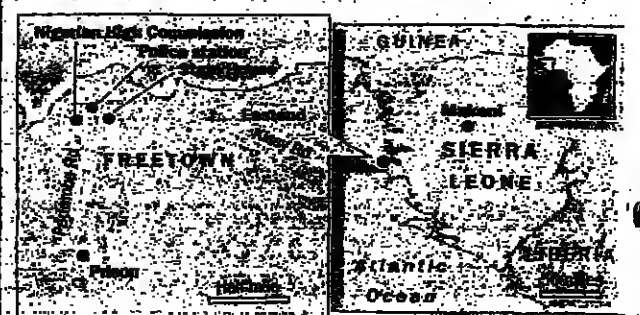
It was not known whether the Front's nominal leader, Foday Sankoh, was in Pademba Road when the rebels stormed it. Rumours were circulating earlier in the week that he had been transferred to another jail.

By midday yesterday, the Government said Ecomog was in control of the situation in Freetown, and that troops were "mopping up" all rebel resistance.

Meanwhile, in an interview with BBC radio, a man calling himself Colonel Sessay, who claimed to be phoning from the State House, said his 15,000 men met "no Ecomog soldiers on their way to the capital".

By late afternoon, neither the whereabouts of Mr Kabbah nor his arch enemy Mr Sankoh was known. The Front rebels had demanded the release of Mr Sankoh as a condition to holding negotiations with the Government.

A United Nations official in Freetown said the rebels were "truly monstrous". They are now looting large numbers of able-bodied men and women into their own ranks after brief training, he said. "There is real panic on the streets though I think that Ecomog will be able to beat them off."



The mother of all splitting headaches

Is your head throbbing on one side only? Is it made worse by every movement, by light, and does any noise make you want to crawl away and disappear? Do you lose your appetite, feel sick or even vomit? If you have this sort of pain, you are not alone in your misery — you have migraine.

One in ten adults in the UK suffers from migraine, and its cost to industry is immense. Half of all sufferers have to take time off with each attack: 30 per cent leave their office or factory to retire to bed. Only 20 per cent continue with their normal activities.

It is not only work that suffers. Some 30 per cent of people with migraine limit their social life for fear of an attack. The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary can take heart: pundits may decry the conflict between family holiday arrangements and the school term but, compared with the problems caused to children by migraine, these few days of absenteeism are as nothing.

Migraine usually starts in childhood or adolescence. In children, boys and girls are equally likely to suffer, but after puberty it is more than twice as common in women — and women sufferers have more frequent attacks. The average duration of an untreated attack is 24 hours, but for some unlucky people it may last for two or three days.

Migraine attacks are classified according to whether or not they are preceded by an aura: a visual disturbance which may take the form of flashing lights or blurring of part of the visual field.



Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on migraine; help for dyslexia; choking; flu and strokes; and personal stereos and hearing loss

The first measure to be taken in treatment is to avoid the triggers that may induce migraine. The nature of these triggers is determined genetically, but other factors dictate how easily an attack is brought on. Stress, and either too much or too little sleep, together with fatty meals, tea, coffee and alcohol, are the most common triggers.

In women, hormone levels can influence attacks. Menstrual migraine is a common

problem and is defined as a migrainous headache which only occurs from two days before a period to three days after it.

Dr Charles Broomhead, one of a group of GPs, nurses and pharmacists known as MIP-CA — Migraine in Primary Care Advisers Group — has studied the effect of exercise on migraine. A dramatic header in the goalmouth may make wonderful television, but it can also induce migraine in the soccer player. A football weighs 400g and when travelling at 30 miles an hour, it can distort the arteries at the base of the brain so that they go into spasm, causing a migraine. Any other sports in which the head is knocked, such as rugby and boxing, can also lead to migraine but so, surprisingly, can swimming, running and weight-training. Many skiers get violent migraines as a result of altitude.

If, despite avoiding trigger factors, the patient is having more than two attacks a month, long-term preventive medication is recommended. The choice includes beta-blockers and 5HT-antagonists such as Sanomigran (pizotifen) and Deseril (methysergide), but other preventive drugs are being introduced.

Many older remedies are still effective once an attack has started, but treatment has been revolutionised by the introduction of triptans. The first triptan was sumatriptan, but there are now three others available which have certain advantages: Maxalt 10 (rizatriptan); Zomig (zolmitriptan) and Naravon (naratriptan). Imigran, however, can be taken by mouth, intranasally or by suppository.



Pure agony: the intense pain of migraine can be triggered by stress, tea, coffee, alcohol or a bump on the head

Help for Europe's dyslexic children

JACKIE STEWART has excelled as a racing driver and Olympic shot but is not afraid to admit that he cannot recite the alphabet, and may be caught out trying to spell the simplest words. At school his lack of literacy was a constant source of shame and embarrassment and he was forever having to devise means of glossing over his inadequacy.

Stewart was dyslexic, but although it may have undermined his education, it may also have been the spur that led to his later success. His foreword to the book *How to Detect and Manage Dyslexia*, by Philomena Ott, describes the humiliation he suffered when repeatedly paraded in front of the class and designated for being unable to read simple passages, or publicly penalised by being made to write 100 times "I will do my homework in future neatly and precisely". The staff may have acted out of ignorance but the taunts, giggles and suppressed laughter of his fellow pupils were, it is suggested, manifestations of the cruelty of children.

Unfortunately dyslexia, which is now accepted and understood in this country, is still little understood on the Continent, where doubtless any slowness in spelling and reading is attributed to such causes as "boys often develop later than girls". Although dyslexia has been recently redefined, the similar but older definition that it is a disorder in which children, despite adequate teaching and opportunity, fail to attain language skills of reading, writing and spelling commensurate with their intellectual abilities is perhaps easier to understand.

A group of parents, teachers and others interested in education have founded an organisation, ECIC (European Children in Crisis) to publicise the problems experienced by dyslexic expatriate children who need help to overcome a learning problem and, at the same time, compete in a classroom with contemporaries from a host of other nationalities.

Today, at the invitation of the Mayor of Brussels and in the presence of a multitude of dignitaries, ECIC is holding a reception in Brussels Town Hall to celebrate the launch of a multimedia training pack for pupils, parents and teachers to explain dyslexia. The pack is available initially in English, French and German, but other language versions will follow. The video, made with the help of the BBC, shows examples of dyslexic children and the problems they face in bilingual families in Europe or multilingual schools.

British parents of dyslexic children need not go to Brussels to learn more about their condition. The British Dyslexia Association has just produced a comprehensive guide, *The Dyslexia Handbook 1999*, which is essential reading for everybody, including doctors, who has an interest in this problem.

● *How to Detect and Manage Dyslexia*, by Philomena Ott, Heinemann, £15.99; *The Dyslexia Handbook 1999*, 27, the British Dyslexia Association, 98 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU (help@bda18.966.8271); ECIC, rue Defoigne 1, 1000 Brussels, Belgium (00 32 2 537 4536)

THE *Journal GP* recently recounted the story of three-year-old Darren from Bury, Greater Manchester, who choked on a lollipop in his doctor's surgery. Fortunately the receptionist noticed that Darren's face had turned blue and that he was semi-conscious. A doctor immediately tried Heimlich's manoeuvre.

Avoid choking to death

In which the pit of a patient's abdomen is subjected to sharp pressure from the doctor's hands clasped over it. At the second attempt, the lollipop was ejected like a cork.

hadn't worked?" asks Dr Peter Standing, one of the other doctors in the practice. He suggests that all doctors should become familiar with the procedure of emergency laryngotomy, which involves making a hole in a patient's

neck below the obstruction so that a tube may be inserted and breathing made possible.

The first step is to become familiar with the anatomy of the neck. The object is to locate a small gap between the thyroid cartilage — the Adam's apple — and the cricoid cartilage, about 3cm lower. A gauge 12 intravenous cannula can then be attached to a syringe and inserted at 45 degrees. Lo and behold, a lollipop-swallower can breathe again.

One place where it is now safe to choke is the Bury surgery. Doctors there have been practising with a pig's larynx (very like the human larynx) bought at the local butcher's, under the eagle eye of their car, nose and throat specialist.

Stresses of flu pose stroke risk

A CHARACTERISTIC of flu this year has been the nausea and vomiting that accompanies it. I recently met an old friend in whom this nearly led to disaster. She had had high blood pressure for many years but had treated it rather dismissively. However, after she had been sick 15-20 times in the day, her blood pressure must have risen to the point where it uncovered a weakness in her cerebral circulation. One of the blood vessels in her brain gave way and she collapsed unconscious.

The important lesson of this case is for the need to bring blood pressure down as low as possible so that ageing blood vessels are not pounded to destruction. The good news is that if a stroke occurs in someone who is hypertensive, it can be treated — their blood pressure can be lowered, although thereafter it will be a ques-

tion of pills, to keep it at a safe level, for what should be a long life.

Further good news from the *British Medical Journal* is that even if the blood, the small stroke, hadn't been induced by flu but was as a result of a congenital weakness in the arterial tree, no dramatic treatment would be needed. About 5 per cent of the population have little unruptured aneurysms — worn, bulging points in the cerebral arteries — but a study has shown that if they are very small, the rate of rupture is less than 0.05 per cent per year.

Conversely, 15.7 per cent of those who have ventured into surgery to deal with a small aneurysm had serious problems. If an aneurysm is larger than 10mm or situated at the junction of the internal carotid and posterior communicating artery, the risk of leaving it is greater.

Personal stereos and deafness

THERE may be a hitherto unrecognised link between Diana, Princess of Wales, and the slightly deaf French Army recruit whose loss of hearing makes him the source of his training sergeant's ire and the butt of other conscripts' jokes.

Three French doctors have been assessing the hearing of more than 1,100 army recruits aged 18 to 24. The research, published in *The Lancet*, centres on the relationship between hearing loss, exposure to noise and a history of ear infections in childhood. The doctors made certain that no recruit who had been subjected to recent noise was included in the trial.

The study confirms that young men who attend rock concerts and discotheques



Personal stereos can make hearing problems worse

twice a month or more often suffer an appreciable hearing loss. Not surprisingly, this loss is not as great as that experienced by those who have had civilian occupations, which exposed them to noise for more

than a six-month period. The connection between the late Princess and the French recruits was that the recruits who shared her fondness for a personal stereo were those most likely to suffer from hearing loss. Careful examination of the background of the recruits who had been appreciably deafened by their headsets showed that those who suffered had also had repeated ear infections during infancy and childhood. Personal stereo use did not influence the hearing of those who did not have otitis media when they were children.

The research by the military doctors from Clamart, in France, is important since it underlines the necessity of treating ear infections adequately in childhood. The child may not grow up to be a fan of pop music but he or she may be subjected to other persistent, heavy noise. Avoiding deafness may depend on an infection having been treated seriously some 30 years earlier.

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Will Hillary have the last laugh?

President Clinton's Senate trial begins today. Will Hillary stick by him, or forge a political career alone? Here, Gail Sheehy reveals the childhood that made the First Lady a formidable fighter but left her addicted to an emotionally unavailable man

THE FIGHTER

When Hillary was four her mother gave her licence to fight a girl who kept punching her. "There is no room in this house for cowards," Dorothy Rodham said. "The next time she hits you, I want you to hit her back."

This became the model for Hillary's operational style. "If I was going to war, I'd want her covering my rear. She's never going to run from a fight," says Congressman Jim McDermott, a Seattle psychiatrist who has insight into Hillary. "I would be more wary of challenging her than another member of Congress," he admitted.

"I wanted my children to be able to keep their equilibrium," Dorothy Rodham told me, explaining how she used a carpenter's level as a visual tool for instruction. She showed Hillary and her brothers the level with the bubble showing dead centre.

"Imagine having this carpenter's level inside you," she told them. "You try to keep that bubble in the centre. Sometimes it will go way here," she said, tipping the instrument to show how the bubble could drift, "and you have to bring it back."

It took a Hillary to raise a president. "Hillary taught him how to fight," says Carolyn Yelland Staley, Bill's boyhood next-door neighbour from Hot Springs. Hillary tried to keep Bill on schedule. "I have to kick his ass every morning," she once told Susan McDougal, according to the late Jim McDougal, the Clintons' Whitewater guru. Hillary toughened him up.

HILLARY'S MOTHER

Hillary carefully censors what she says about Bill — even with her own mother. Dorothy Rodham does not grant interviews. She lives in a condominium in Little Rock co-owned by Hillary.

I was able recently to engage her in a conversation. "We don't get down and have those mother-daughter discus-

sions about how she relates to her husband, her daughter or anything else as far as her personal life is concerned. We don't talk about deeply personal things."

Does Hillary feel pain very deeply? "Of course she does — she is a very sensitive person," Mrs Rodham said, her voice tightening. "But she is able not to over-emotionalise it. She doesn't go into one of these horribly overwrought kinds of rages. That's one thing I never did either."

A TOUGH FATHER

Hugh Rodham prided himself on having trained young naval recruits for combat during the Second World War and he used his old methods in raising his children. Hillary tellingly describes him as "a self-sufficient, tough-minded small businessman."

"When I brought home straight As from junior high," Hillary once wrote, "my father's only comment was 'Well Hillary, that must be an easy school you go to.' No matter how well she did, her father was always 'raising the bar'."

FOR THE LOVE OF BILL

When, in 1992, I asked the candidate's wife to name the most exciting experience of her twenties, she laughed and replied: "Falling in love with Bill Clinton... He wasn't afraid of me."

He tapped into a part of Hillary that no one else ever had, says Betsey Wright, Clinton's Chief of Staff when he was the Governor of Arkansas. "Everyone else saw her as a terribly serious woman, very intense. He saw the side of her that liked spontaneity and laughter. He discovered her gurgling laugh: it's fabulous — there's nothing held back. The public never sees that side of her. When she's laughing, that's when she's free."

Judith Hope, the chairwoman of the New York State Democratic Party, organised a big event at the home of the Clinton family in Annapolis. "He just keeps seducing this woman over and over again. This kind of chemistry can't be faked. She can't resist him." Hillary is addicted to Bill. "That man would lie down and kill himself before he would let her leave him," insists Betsey Wright. "There have been other temptations but Hillary is the love of his life."

"He's intimate only when he's seducing," says Dick Morris, a former Clinton strategist. But one-on-one, in terms of a real intimate love relationship — such as a marriage — he backs away. He withholds.

A formerly close aide who was by Clinton's side in both public and private situations says: "He is emotionally unavailable. He lives on campaign junk love and casual sex — where no long-term commitment is required."



Bill discovered her gurgling laugh: it's fabulous — there's nothing held back. The public never sees that side of her. When she's laughing that's when she's free

HER POLITICAL FUTURE

"Perhaps a myth had developed in their marriage that Bill Clinton was utterly detached from the practicalities of life and that she was good at it. But aside from his philanthropy," says a long-time ally, "almost every problem the guy got into — Whitewater, Travelgate, Filegate, the early appointments, how she made money, cattle futures — all that was Hillary. She is awful at this stuff. She is terrible. Almost the worst I have ever seen."

When Bill Clinton is influenced by his politically tone-deaf wife, he falls flat.

"Handling White House operations wasn't what Hillary cared to do," concedes a top aide. Hillary's uncompromising style — an asset in the courtroom — proved contrary to the craft of capital politics, where compromise is a necessity. She had a tin ear for how to sell her ideas. Betsey Wright dismisses any idea that Hillary would want an elective or appointive post.

"I don't think that she wants to be in Washington or in the thick of politics. I think she wants a life. Washington has been a cruel personal experience. It has taken a terrible personal toll."

HILLARY'S NEWS CENSORSHIP

One reason why Hillary is able to maintain her momentum is that she imposes a PG rating on the news digests that

her staff prepare for her — no sex, no late-night talk-show gibes, no fact about the scandal that might distress or distract her. Hillary is not a news junkie like her husband. She would rather review reports on health maintenance organisations than wallow in tabloid or television accounts of her problems. Betsey Wright told me jokingly: "Hillary is probably the only person in America you could tell a cigar joke to and she wouldn't get it."

HILLARY TELLS THE TRUTH

On the American television programme *Today* late last January, speaking with a certainty that few married people could muster, Hillary declared that she and her husband "know everything there is to know about each other." Nobody could have predicted the snowball effect it would set off — except Bill Clinton. To keep from telling Hillary the full and awful truth, he lied to everyone else. By the end of 1998 he was still lying about his lies.

CHELSEA THE LINCIPIN

Betsey Wright recalls Bill taking the time to practise the piano with Chelsea while impatient aides waited. The Clintons' resident babysitter in the mid-1980s, Melinda Martin, says: "Whenever Hillary was there, she always sat with Chelsea while she had dinner." The Clintons rarely went

out together in those years of strain on their high-wire marriage.

Bill once called Dick Morris to report: "I don't think we are going to make it." But Hillary, according to Betsey Wright, never gave her husband an out. Chelsea was their reason to hang on.

TELLING CHELSEA

For years Chelsea had been the President's Saturday night "date" for dinner on the many weekends when Hillary was out of town. Who now would play hearts with him in the wee small hours when insomnia would not let go its grip on his unquiet mind? Who now would love him unconditionally? Chelsea had one foot across the threshold of independence when Bill Clinton took up with Monica Lewinsky, who was six years older than his daughter. In the autumn of 1997 Chelsea would leave him for Stanford.

With her departure, the Clintons would lose their most elemental personal bond, their emotional oasis. Hillary, too, felt the void. A few years before Chelsea went off to college, Hillary even floated the idea of adopting another child. She was mocked — too old.

Hillary told a Miami banquet audience that autumn: "I'm looking for ways to divert myself from the empty nest. And I'll take just about any invitation to dinner that I can get."

CHELSEA AGAINST HER FATHER

Their beloved daughter was called home three weeks following her return to Stanford University after spending Christmas with her parents. Who was going to tell her, and what?

In effect, Hillary told her husband there was no room in this White House for cowards.

You take your daughter to Camp David and explain it yourself. I'm going to Davos.

Chelsea, some say, was so devastated by the revelation that her father had lied to her and her mother that she fought with him.

Her friend the Rev Jesse Jackson called the White House to see if he could help. Chelsea asked him to come. The night before the President was due to testify before Starr's grand jury, Jackson told me that he calmed Chelsea and Hillary with Bible stories.

Later he said: "What's different here is that Starr is able to play God with government funding."

Hillary, Jackson says, let out a whooping laugh. "Where did you get that line?" "It has a trademark," he said, "if you use it, give me credit."

CLINTON'S MID-LIFE CRISIS

Three personal markers in Clinton's life occurred during the two years he carried on his affair with Monica.

The two most adoring women in his life "abandoned him" in ways he could not prevent. His mother, Virginia Kelley, died of cancer a year after his inaugural celebration.

But even more agonising was the long, slow slipping-out of his arms of his daughter. The third was when he fell down the stairs at a golf pro's house; overnight, he took on the accoutrements of decay and dependence: wheelchair, brace, cane.

Clinton had always believed that he would die prematurely; he was haunted by the image of Bill Blythe's fatal crash before his own birth, the car carrying the young man they said was his father careering off the road, out of control.

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THE TIMES
FREE BOOKS SCHOOLS

Fay Weldon chooses her favourite book

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN was the most influential for me when young. They are not fairytales but morality tales. Indeed, they seem distinctly unsuitable for children. *The Little Mermaid*, for instance, is an exercise in masochism. Such stories as *The Snow Queen* are brilliantly surreal — they cut to the quick and you end up wishing that they were true. It is all the more tragic because they are not.



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Cheap shots on the grouse moors

A new weapon is aimed at the lairds, says Magnus Linklater

It was a piquant occasion, one for the memoirs: the landowning class had been summoned to Bute House, principal residence of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Scotland, to learn its fate. Its representatives sat meekly on gilt chairs, in the Georgian splendour of the first-floor drawing-room. The press had softened them up in advance with some ferocious headlines: "Rogue lairds to have their land sold off", "Feudal rights to be abolished", "Dewar set to break up big estates".

Among those attending were the Duke of Buccleuch and his son, the Earl of Dalkeith, with their 260,000 acres in the Borders, Lord Ramsay, with his estates in Angus, John Grant of Rothiemurcus, with 24,000 acres of the Highlands, and members of the Scottish Landowners' Federation. The Government had warned them that it intended to tackle abuses which stretched back over the years, which had prevented local communities from controlling their own destinies, which allowed a handful of rich families to own half the Highlands.

Such reforms may well drive land prices down

Land reform. The very phrase has a 19th-century ring to it. Now, however, said Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, it was at the top of the agenda — one of the first measures to be introduced when a Scottish parliament meets this year. On Tuesday, as he outlined his proposals to an anxious audience, the whiff of socialism drifted across the room. A future Government would intervene to hold up private sales of land if they were judged against "the public interest": local communities would be given a right to buy whenever land changed hands; they would be helped, with lottery funds, to put together bids; the Government, not the market, would determine the value of the land being sold; compulsory purchase orders would be used by ministers to buy land and transfer it to the community if local people had not been given the chance to bid for it.

It is hard to explain to a non-Scottish youth such apparently drastic action should be deemed necessary. On the surface it is a blatant interference in the market, a form of government regulation that would provoke outrage if applied to any other aspect of the private sector. It could drive land prices down and scare off prospective owners. And why should the sale of a family estate not be conducted with the same freedom as selling the family silver?

It is not as if the abuses themselves are earth-shattering. There was the Elgg controversy, when that beautiful Hebridean island was bought over the heads of the inhabitants by an obscure German aristocrat; there is the

Knoydart Estate, whose owner is at the centre of a fraud inquiry; and, many years ago, there was a dispute on the west coast island of Raasay over an English absentee landlord who wilfully prevented the development of his land. Against these must be set the vast majority of estate owners, who have invested heavily in their acres, provided local employment, and maintained good community relations. They do so usually in places where jobs are scarce and the economy fragile. Some, like Paul van Vliet, a Dutchman, invest upwards of £100,000 a year for negligible financial return. The Earl of Cawdor spent £40,000 last year to keep the local post office open. The Buccleuch Estates employ 300 people and maintain several businesses. Whether local communities could match this commitment is only one of the questions raised by the proposals.

The roots of the Government's reforming zeal, however, go deeper. Land reform has long been an unchallenged feature of Labour policy. It is radical, relatively cost-free and popular. It taps into a very

Scottish sense of history which goes back to the 19th-century Highland Clearances, and still has echoes today. Meanwhile, the once-powerful Scottish lairds have little doubt within their own circles. In these circumstances, championing an impeccably left-wing cause — particularly when so many others have had to be shelved — makes political sense.

One might, in these circumstances, have expected a growth of protest from the assembled company as they heard Mr Dewar outline his proposals. It was, however, all very well-mannered; indeed the general reaction was one of relief that nothing worse had been put forward. The Scottish Secretary reassured his listeners that this was not a raid on their territory and that "good landlords have nothing to fear". The punitive measures he was contemplating would be used only in extreme cases. Mr Dewar's sole concern was to promote "diversity" and "accountability".

The fact remains, however, that if these proposals are voted on to the statute book, a powerful interventionist weapon will be handed to any Scottish parliament. It will have free rein to determine who is a "bad landlord" and to take steps accordingly. Whether that will benefit those who live on the land is another matter altogether. What constitutes a "local community" and whether it can create jobs any better than traditional owners remains unexplained. Until that is properly spelled out, the suspicion must remain that what was hailed as a bold act of modern reform is, at heart, nothing more than gesture politics.

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Low interest currency

The euro has left the people cold.

They need not worry before 2002

Well, that's it then. The single currency has arrived. Wim Duisenberg, the president of the European Central Bank, has achieved what the legions of Caesar and the armies of Napoleon and Hitler: he has merged the French and German economies and their key governmental functions. But the sky has not fallen in. The hallowed mark has been abolished and the mighty Bundesbank — said to be the one postwar institution that commanded universal respect among Germans — has been castrated. But the German people have not even bothered to mount a protest, never mind to exchange their savings into dollars or Swiss francs. Meanwhile, the technical execution has proceeded without a hitch.

The computer boffins who missed their new year holidays delivered the goods. The euro started trading with absolutely no problems. It rose just a bit in value against the dollar — enough to prove it was a strong and reliable store of value, but not so much as to plunge European industrialists into British-style hard-currency gloom. Financial markets have celebrated with a new year rally, taking share prices in Paris and Frankfurt to within a whisker of their all-time records and inspiring predictions of a new golden age of European prosperity and competitive capitalism. Yet, among the general public, the interest in the launch of economic and monetary union appears to have been quite low.

Having just spent a week in Ireland, the country that has benefited more than any other from euphoria about the euro, I was surprised by the apparent indifference with which the whole event was treated by the shopkeepers of Co Galway and the Irish media. The Irish radio broadcasts were dominated, as they always are at this time of year, by warnings about hurricanes and New Year's Eve police dragnets. There were also, as usual, reports of cancelled ferries and the normal complaints from farmers about the scandalously low price paid for abattoirs for beef. The first day of trading in the euro earned only some perfunctory mentions on the news broadcasts and front pages, with detailed discussion relegated to the

financial news. There were no signs in the shops and the bars about euro prices and shopkeepers were as willing to take payment in pounds sterling as they always have been. Upon my return to Britain I found the absence of euro-triumphalism even more striking. Why, then, have the celebrations among the British advocates of EMU been so subdued?

Two short-term reasons are obvious enough. The EMU cause in Britain has suffered a thoroughly dismal Christmas, despite the financial headlines about investors' "enthusiasm" for the euro (which, if truth were told, was largely a matter of catching up with the euphoria on Wall Street in the days after Christmas, when European markets were mostly closed). First there was the fall of Peter Mandelson, easily the Government's most important euro-promoter. With Mr Mandelson out of the Cabinet, there should be an attrition of stories, especially in the *Financial Times*, about "senior ministers" who believe that membership of EMU is "inevitable" and are pressing Tony Blair to start an early referendum campaign. Then, on Tuesday, there was the *Guardian*/ICM poll, which showed that British voters would currently vote against EMU membership by a margin of 52 to 29 per cent, with a surprisingly small 19 per cent saying they were undecided. Of course this kind of polling says little about how people would actually vote at a different time and after a long referendum campaign. But the fact that the anti-euro majority is bigger today than it was at the time of the general election must surely count as a disappointment for EMU lobbyists. They have been working zealously to convince the public that Britain will become a banana republic and that British industries will be reduced to rubble if the pound remains outside the euro-zone — yet these warnings seem to have had no impact.

Until a few months ago they were able to console themselves with the thought that the single currency was little more than a theoretical abstraction. Voters were not bothering to listen to the pro-EMU case. But as the euro became a reality, surely the British people should have started to feel the humiliating pangs of exclusion and to recognise the dangers of staying "outside in the cold"? So far, there has been no sign of any such shift in opinion. But the euro-enthusiasts still believe that time, and historical inevitability, are on their side. Surely the British people, who have traditionally favoured pragmatism over ideology, will now be swayed by the practical success of the

Anatole Kaletsky

euro? Surely they will resent the folly of exchanging currencies at national borders? Surely they will ignore all the sentimental claptrap about national sovereignty once they see the practical benefits of the euro? Perhaps this will happen in time. But the horrible reality which the pro-EMU lobbyists have conveniently ignored until this week, but cannot ignore any longer, is that the British and continental political timetables are again moving unhelpfully out of sync. British proponents of EMU have always assumed that the launch of the single currency would create a sense of reality and inevitability that would sweep all before them. What they forgot was that bankers and businessmen do not always share the same sense of reality as ordinary voters. The launch of the euro may have been the biggest upheaval in years for investment managers, corporate financiers and foreign-exchange dealers. But for the vast majority of voters it has been a non-event. In fact, until euro notes and coins are actually issued the euro will remain a disembodied abstraction — nothing more than a blip on a City dealers' screen.

The really bad news for the British EMU lobby is that the physical

creation of the euro, which will not begin until January 2002, will probably come too late to have any positive psychological impact on a general election that is likely to be held in the summer of 2001. Until 2002, British tourists will still have to change their money and perform arithmetic acrobatics, not only when they leave Britain, but also when they cross borders between France, Italy and Spain. They will find this particularly galling after being led to believe by the euro lobbyists in Britain that EMU has turned Europe into a single currency promised land.

To make matters worse, British voters will continue to read about clashes between European finance ministers and tensions between central bankers, at a time when the economic cycles in Germany and Britain are again diverging in a potentially unhelpful way. In the two years between now and the next general election, Britain should be pulling out of its present economic slowdown, the pound may be falling slightly, to the benefit of British industry, and interest rates are likely to remain stable or continue to fall. In much of Europe, meanwhile, the current strength of the euro is likely to cause an economic slowdown and a reduction in exports, which will not reach their nadir until some time in 1999.

It is quite possible, therefore, that in the period leading up to the general election, Europe will suffer some political tensions or economic disappointments, while Britain's performance proves no worse than expected, or even slightly improves. If so, British people will readily attribute this divergence to the abstract economic experiment of creating the euro. If, on the other hand, Europe prospers, they will find it difficult to see why this should be attributed directly to the euro. Either way, the bias in the British public's assessment of the euro is likely to become even more sceptical than it is today. Only after the physical euro is created will this period of limbo come to an end. Only after 2002 will the British public be able to begin a serious and objective assessment of joining EMU.

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You can't hurry me, love

Prince Edward was right to wait, argues James Brown

Five years might seem like a long time even for a Prince to go a-courting. But I can assure you that even as Sophie Rhys-Jones's friends are screaming "At last, what took him so long?", Prince Edward's mates will be worrying about how quickly he has rushed into this. Marriage (or proposal) is definitely the most awkward part of the modern male/female interface. And not just for royals.

The real truth of modern relationships is that men and women have never been closer in their need for commitment. Yet after a few months of frolicking in the lusty froth of a new relationship, as a couple are congratulating themselves on having found someone with whom they want to share their bed, flake, and time, their thoughts will be moving at very different speeds. The women, especially those in their late 20s and early 30s, will be considering their new beau as a potential husband, whereas the boyfriend might just be considering throwing his pornographic magazines away.

Men are cautious about rushing into marriage with a good reason. Those of us born around or after England's 1966 World Cup win are unwitting victims of A Generation of Divorce. It's high enough in men's minds for the British singer Paddy Quaye to admit "I'm a Snapper" — the Irish term for being illegitimate — and "I wish I had a pappy to show me right from wrong". As well as worrying about creating a marriage that will last no longer than the average football manager's contract, men have few decent role-models to show them the way.

Five years ago every mother in the land would have loved to have Will Carling or Kenneth Branagh as a son-in-law and yet both have crashed their marriages all over the tabloids. These two squeaky clean men fell at the first hurdle. But genuine masculine heroes are no better. Paul Weller is divorced. Robert De Niro was recently embroiled in a French scandal and Glenn Hoddle spent more time with his faith healer and his mistress than with his wife.

Good marital role-models are few and far between for young men. Michael and Shakira Camee spring to mind, as do Jonathan and Jane Ross. These are good fellows with front and style who see their wives as an important part of their lives not just an extra seat at a premiere.

It's not laziness or fear that prevent real men from rushing down the aisle, but genuine concern that they don't take on something they can't handle. Thirty years ago women would have been happy to be thanked for putting the dinner on the table and amazed if the husband did the washing up.

Nowadays women would like you to look like Leonardo DiCaprio, charm like Johnny Vaughan and behave like Gary Lineker. Pretty hard going for an average guy with British teeth, second-hand jokes, and only Walkers Crisps in common with the Football Focus golden boy.

I still don't see why you have to get married. The fashion designer Paul Smith and his partner, Pauline, have lived happily together for more than thirty years with no sign of a wedding ring. Following Peter Cook's example, I initially tried to persuade my lovely girlfriend Kaz to get married but live in a different house from me, for her own sake. But rightly, she wasn't having it.

When I did propose, a gloriously drunken spur-of-the-moment affair in a London bar after just three months, I woke the next day to negotiate a 12-month settling-in period before we would get engaged. That gap relieved us of any pressure that might have been brought on by a post-proposal cool-down.

Certainly the colleague who met and wed a woman within a month wasn't happy to discover he'd married a maniac and it was no surprise when, a very painful year later, we had to scoop him off the platform at Clapham Junction — a broken man minus his dignity and his flat.

So if it does appear that men are a little slow in asking women to marry them, it's with good reason. After all, they're just flexing that organ women are always complaining they don't see enough of — the brain. A slow march towards engagement isn't a sign that men don't care. It's proof that they do. I've never asked my best man, eight years into his relationship, why he hasn't proposed because it's one of my damned business. Any woman who was worth their salt and wanted to get married should be able to strong-arm their partners to the registry office.

Once my 12 months were up there was more nag than the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Over a year into wedded bliss, I've only just managed to get the wedding photos developed and am now considering getting a ring. Ladies, getting married is the least of your problems. Getting your husbands to realise what they've done is much harder. Don't panic though, not all guys are so reluctant. When David Batty, the England footballer, heard he would be unable to attend his agent's third wedding because of international duty, he replied: "Never mind, I'll go to the next one."

The author is Editor of GQ magazine.

Wills power

A MINISTER appointed to regulate businesses in the aftermath of Peter Mandelson's disgrace faces censure by his new department for his own entrepreneurial activities. Michael Wills, new minister for Trade and Industry (with responsibility for small businesses) is in trouble over his own extremely small business. Wills, director of Attractions Limited, a struggling TV production outfit, has not sent the company's annual returns to Companies House — which reports to his own DTI. All limited companies are requested to do so or face a court order.

Attractions Ltd is now so late that it has been sent a default notice and is waiting for its final warning. If it still fails to comply, the DTI will step in. "It can easily end in court," says a gleeful bod from Companies House.

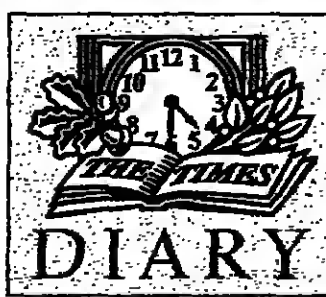
Wills (right) seems keen to distance himself from the firm. "I am going to seek the shares at the end of the week to the other partners," he tells me. "We have no interest in it now. It has stopped operations." Not that it was ever particularly active. Under Wills, Attractions made a Channel Five series, featuring fun sites for the family to visit. "It was a great idea, but they never recommended the series," Wills ventures.

Before being appointed a Trade minister earlier this week, Wills was producer and director of Juniper Communications. During his headship, he tells me he



produced "many great programmes" including a series of interviews with Bill Gates, Robert Redford (left) and Richard Dawkins as well as a programme about Feng Shui. "When you own a company, it allows you to do whatever you want," he adds. Rather like being a minister then.

REGAL displeasure may be behind the choice of St George's Chapel, Windsor, first mooted here as the venue for the Queen's wedding. The Queen has not been impressed by



the unseemly sacking of Dr Martin Neary, the organist, by the Dean, Dr Wesley Carr — hence the "desire for a more personal celebration than recent royal weddings".

Panto prince

HAS Robert Harris been spinning a line about his chum Peter Mandelson? The novelist told journalists inquiring about Wendy, so named by his old security guards, over the new year that he had "a feeling he's gone abroad". The next day, as darkness fell over Oxford, panto-goers at the Playhouse for a *Cherubella* matinee saw Harris and Wendy, clutching a child of his notorious apostasy (Wendy is fairly godfather to Robert's youngest, Manilla) before slipping into Browns for a bite. Warbles his wicked sister: "I bet the children yelled 'your career's behind you'."

IF THE dawn chorus is a little subdued at Greenwich these days, blame Greg Hayman, Dome spokesman. The man hoping that the black redstarts do not nest in an awkward spot on the construction site keeps pigeons in Wilksworth, Derbyshire, where his bird-control skills are legendary. "He is the first person to call if a pigeon needs strapping," I am told.

Silent honour

THE public Honours system appears to be not so public after all. I have learnt that Paddy Devlin, an Ulster Catholic and staunch nation-



alist, received a CBE this year but appeared nowhere in the New Year's Honours List. Devlin was keen to keep news of his honour from his republican cronies — but he still wanted the honour, thanks very much. Whitehall says that while this is unusual, Devlin is entitled to privacy. I hope the Queen is pleased with her new Commander.

ARRIVING in leisurely style at Diary Towers is the Child Support Agency Christmas card. "Goodwill towards men," it states. A U-turn?

Free and easy

TONY BLAIR spurned an offer to holiday in Blighy before his rather fraught trip to the Seychelles. Fiona Bruce, an old habitué of the islands, was so alarmed that the PM should return despite the "appalling human rights record" (I think she means in the Seychelles) that she offered the use of her home in the Lake District instead and entered into quite a correspondence with the PM. "It only has three bedrooms, but there is a sofa-bed too," she tells me. "And there is plenty of room in the village for his guards." It would also have been free — saving the Blairs £30,000.

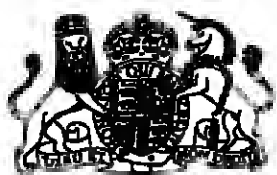
"CULT" television has lured another victim. Helena Bonham



Carter wants to join Charlie's Angels. The Seventies series which slipped Farrah Fawcett, Jaclyn Smith and Kate Jackson into tight trousers and disburbed the adolescent dreams of a generation, also appeals to Helena, my favourite actress. "From a young age I wanted to be one of the Angels," she says. "I wanted to be Kate Jackson [the relatively clever angel, Sabrina Duncan]. Even though I was a very shy child who didn't like standing up in front of people." Helena has timed her pitch well. A film, with new Angels serving the mysterious Charlie Townsend, is imminent.

JASPER GERARD

سكول من لايصل



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 6: It is with the greatest pleasure that The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh announce the betrothal of their beloved son The Prince Edward to Miss Sophie Rhys-Jones, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Rhys-Jones.

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 6: Today being the Feast of the Epiphany, a Sung Eucharist was held in the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, when the customary offerings of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh were made on behalf of The Queen by Air Vice-Marshal David Hawkins-Lush and Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Birdwood (Gentlemen Ushers to Her Majesty).

The Bishop of London (Dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal) was the Celebrant and presented the Offerings, assisted by the Reverend William Booth (Sub-Dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal) and the Reverend Mark Oakley (Deputy Priest in Ordinary).
The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeoman of the Guard was on duty in the Chapel.
THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
January 6: Princess Alexandra, Duchess of Kent, was accompanied by the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, was represented by Mrs Peter Aftis at the Funeral of the Earl of Lanesborough which was held at St Leonard's Church, Swinhead, Leicestershire this afternoon.

School news

Brentwood School
The Lent Term begins today. Entrance Examinations for the Main and Preparatory Schools take place on January 30. Half Term is from February 12 to February 22. The Chamber Concert will be held on February 3. A Jazz and Musical concert takes place on February 10. An Ensemble Concert takes place on March 3. An Orchestral Concert takes place on March 11. The Junior School production of *Grinm Tales* will be performed from March 18 to 20. The Old Brentwoods Society Dinner will be held on March 26. School Term ends on March 26.

Dea Close School
Lent Term begins today. Paul Marchant is Captain of Hockey. On Saturday, February 6, there will be an Open Morning. The Art Scholarships will take place on January 26. 13 Academic Scholarship examinations on February 22, 23 and 24. Music Scholarship auditions on March 4. Sixth Form Scholarship Examinations will take place on March 6. In the Bacon Theatre *The Duchess of Malfi* will be presented on February 5 and 6 and *A Man for All Seasons* on March 12 and 13. The Chamber Concert for Lent is on February 28 in the Prince Michael's Hall and the Passion Play on March 14 in Chapel. The Bishop of Tewkesbury will conduct Confirmation on Sunday, March 7. The Old Decanians matches are on March 12 and term ends on Wednesday, March 17.

Gads Hill School, Kent
To mark the 75th anniversary of Gads Hill School (originally Gads Hill Place School), a service will be held in Rochester Cathedral on Friday, June 25, with a dinner afterwards at the school. A Family Day will be held on June 26 when all past pupils and staff, and their families, will be welcome. For details telephone 01474 82266.

Laymer Upper School, W6
The Spring Term began yesterday at Laymer Upper School and ends on March 25. The Spring Concert is on March 11, and there is a Concert at St Paul's, Hammer-

smith, on March 17, featuring the orchestras of Laymer Upper and the Godolpin & Laymer School. The Middle School plays *Guards*, *Guards* is on March 3, and the Sixth Form Production will be from March 18-20. The International Work Experience Programme, in association with schools from Madrid, Berlin, Paris and New York commences at the end of term.

Queen Margaret's School, York
Spring Term begins today and ends on March 19. The Sixth Form Scholarship and Music Scholarship Examinations are scheduled for February 24. The Music Scholars' Concert will take place on January 24 and Eveninging on March 18. The Art Scholarships will be held on March 1. A Fashion Show in aid of the National Asthma Campaign will take place at the school on March 3. The Bishop of Selby will officiate at the service of Confirmation on March 14. The skating party for Austria over Half Term and the History of Art visit to Rome and Florence takes place after the end of term.

St John's School, Leatherhead
The Spring Term began yesterday at St John's School, Leatherhead. Matthew Gadd is School Captain and Jonathan Allen is Deputy Captain. Aidan Nugent is Captain of Football and Laura Milton is Captain of Netball. Churchill House will perform *Adventures on Church Hill* on February 11 and 12, and Brendan Behan's *The Hostage* will be performed by the school on March 18 and 19. Eveninging with Prep Schools is at 6.30pm on Tuesday, March 9. There will be an Orchestral Play for Prep Schools on January 28 and the School Concert is at 7.30pm on Sunday, March 14.

Appointment

Sir Ivan Callin to be Ambassador at Laymer Upper School, a Family Day on March 25. The Spring Concert is on March 11, and there is a Concert at St Paul's, Hammer-

Birthdays today

Mr Richard Armstrong, conductor, 56; Dr Tim Black, chief executive, Global Family Planning Charity, Marie Stopes International, 62; Her Honour Hazel Court, 66; Mr Hunter Davies, author and broadcaster, 63; Mr Tony Elliott, founder, Time Out Group, 52; Sir Peter Graham, QC, 65; Sir Stuart Hampson, chairman, John Lewis Partnership, 52; the Right Rev Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans, 85; Mr Ian La Trévis, screenwriter and producer, 62; Sir Charles Massfield, former test pilot, 57; Mr Ross Norman, squash champion, 40; the Viscount of Oxford, 65; Sir John Page, former chairman, National Public Radio, 64; Lady (Kensington) Scott, former chairwoman, Volunteer Centre UK, 67; Air Commodore the Hon Sir Peter Varneke, former Lord Mayor of London, 77; Sir John Walker, FRIS, molecular biologist, 58; Mr Will Young, chief executive, BBC Radio 5, 37; Mr Roger D. Young, former Director-General, Institute of Management, 59.

Premium Bonds

The following Premium Bond prize-winners for January have been announced:
£20,000: 462N 50726, winner has a holding of £10,000 and comes from Kent.
£10,000: 12303, 12304, 12305, 12306, 12307, 12308, 12309, 12310, 12311, 12312, 12313, 12314, 12315, 12316, 12317, 12318, 12319, 12320, 12321, 12322, 12323, 12324, 12325, 12326, 12327, 12328, 12329, 12330, 12331, 12332, 12333, 12334, 12335, 12336, 12337, 12338, 12339, 12340, 12341, 12342, 12343, 12344, 12345, 12346, 12347, 12348, 12349, 12350, 12351, 12352, 12353, 12354, 12355, 12356, 12357, 12358, 12359, 12360, 12361, 12362, 12363, 12364, 12365, 12366, 12367, 12368, 12369, 12370, 12371, 12372, 12373, 12374, 12375, 12376, 12377, 12378, 12379, 12380, 12381, 12382, 12383, 12384, 12385, 12386, 12387, 12388, 12389, 12390, 12391, 12392, 12393, 12394, 12395, 12396, 12397, 12398, 12399, 12400, 12401, 12402, 12403, 12404, 12405, 12406, 12407, 12408, 12409, 12410, 12411, 12412, 12413, 12414, 12415, 12416, 12417, 12418, 12419, 12420, 12421, 12422, 12423, 12424, 12425, 12426, 12427, 12428, 12429, 12430, 12431, 12432, 12433, 12434, 12435, 12436, 12437, 12438, 12439, 12440, 12441, 12442, 12443, 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OBITUARIES

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PAUL RIVIERE

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Riviere, OBE, MM, of the French Resistance, died on December 16 aged 86. He was born on November 22, 1912.

As the Resistance officer responsible on the ground for handling the RAF's paratroopers, landing and pickup operations in the southern half of France in 1943-44, Paul Riviere was responsible for the reception into France and the return to England of more agents than any other similar Free French controller. The landings of SOE agents were made the more perilous when it was decided to supplement the Lysander, with its spectacularly short landing and take-off, by the much larger and heavier Hudson bomber, which, modified as a troop carrier, could bring in and retrieve many more agents at once.

But Hudson operations, though more effective, also involved greater danger. Whereas the Lysander, well laden, could be airborne within a hundred yards and could land and take off on dimly marked grass strips by

the aid of its own landing lights, the Hudson required up to five times this length with a 450-metre long flare-path of electric torches for night landings.

In carrying out his duties, Riviere had to travel all over the enemy-occupied area between Switzerland, Bordeaux, the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean by car, train and bicycle, journeys made the more dangerous as he was frequently carrying arms, large sums of money or wireless equipment. Yet his astonishing coolness and courage carried him through the control.

Like his father, Paul Claude Marie Riviere had been a schoolmaster before the war, but in 1939 he was mobilised as an instructor of cavalry cadets at Saumur. In June 1940 he fought for three days to hold up the German crossing of the Loire.

In the wake of the defeat of France he joined Henri Frey's resistance movement, *Combat*, at the end of 1941. At first he distributed clandestine news sheets before, in June 1942, conducting his first parachute operation, the reception of a saboteur and six heavy

containers. Soon afterwards he was arrested for distributing propaganda and but was given a prison sentence of only four months, which he served in a Vichy prison in Lyons.

In November he helped to receive a Lysander bringing 20 million francs for Jean Moulin, the former prefect of the Eure et Loire department who had remained in France and become de Gaulle's Chief of the Resistance. In April 1943 he helped Bruno Larat, the head of air and sea operations for the previously unoccupied zone of France, to receive a Hudson, which returned to the following month to take eight agents to England, including Riviere, who was to have a programme of training by the SOE, the RAF and the Free French. This was to include the vital training in organising Hudson landings.

On the occasion of the June landing Hudson's flare-path of electric torches was laid out by Larat, helped by Genevieve Passin (Jannik) whom Riviere later married.

While Riviere was in England Larat was arrested and Riviere was selected to replace him. His programme of training had to be curtailed so that



Riviere: risky clandestine operations in occupied France

he could be parachuted into France as soon as possible after he was qualified to receive Hudson landings. In his role as Head of the Section for Landing and Parachute

recruit local teams to form "reception committees". He also had to organise secure hospitality for passengers before and after operations, and arrange clandestine movements for all involved at times when any movement was forbidden by the Germans.

In each moonlit period from July to October 1943 Riviere received at least one Hudson landing, by crews from No 161 Special Duties Squadron. In October alone three Hudsons landed on his fields, to carry to England 26 people including Resistance and Maquis leaders. Among the most important passengers were Vincent Auriant, a future President of France, and General de Lattre de Tassigny, one of the four Allied Commanders who later took the surrender of Germany.

For several of these Hudson pick-ups Riviere's assistant was Jannik. In one, in some confusion about where the aircraft would touch down, he found himself flat on the ground with one main wheel rolling through the grass on each side of him. Luckily the tail wheel had not yet touched the ground. In the morning one of the gendarmes investi-

gating the incident for the Vichy authorities found Riviere's spectacles, pipe and torch and surreptitiously returned them to him.

The penultimate Hudson pickup supervised by Riviere almost came to grief when a hard frost gave way to a sudden thaw, making the ground perilously soft. Nevertheless the desperate situation of the two agents to be picked up — Raymond Aubrac, a member of de Gaulle's Consultative Assembly in Algiers, had just escaped from a Gestapo prison and his wife Lucie was about to give birth — seemed to justify the risk. In the event the Hudson was stuck in mud for two and a half-hours, in spite of all the efforts of local villagers and their horses, but it eventually got clear ahead of the Gestapo.

The last Hudson received by Riviere was in May 1944 and this time it took him back to England. In British archives it was recorded of him: "No other organiser in France was of greater help to his British colleagues in the field."

He next joined de Gaulle's secret service as a lieutenant-colonel. After the war he joined the regular army and

retained that rank until 1962, serving in Indo-China, Germany and Japan, where he was Military Attaché from 1956 to 1959, when he became responsible for Military Security in Algeria. In 1962 he was elected Gaullist Deputy for the Loire, holding his seat until 1978. While a member of Parliament he was concerned especially with the defence budget. He was also a delegate to the Council of Europe, where he and his wife were very popular with British and other delegates.

In retirement he and Jannik lived happily at his native village, Montigny (of which he served for some years as mayor) in the big house he had built. They also had a flat in Paris, from which they could easily visit their friends in England. Besides his British decorations (Officer of the Order of the British Empire and Military Medal), Riviere was a Companion of the Liberation and a Commander of the Legion of Honour. He was also decorated by Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

His wife predeceased him. He leaves three sons and a daughter.

JERRY QUARRY

Jerry Quarry, American heavyweight boxer, died of pneumonia in Templeton, California, on January 3 aged 53, having suffered from dementia pugilistica for many years. He was born in Los Angeles on May 15, 1945.

ALTHOUGH he earned more than \$2 million in the boxing ring and had some good quality victories in the 1970s, notably over Floyd Patterson and the British and European champion Jack Bodell, Jerry Quarry will be best remembered for one of his defeats, that by Muhammad Ali in 1970. It was not that the fight was a classic. Quarry was stopped on cuts in the third round after providing some useful range-finding and target practice for Ali. But the occasion was the former world champion's return to the ring after a three-and-a-half-year enforced lay-off, and the boxing public was agog to see what effect this "inactivity" might have on his remarkable powers.

The heavyweight division had acquired a new champion in the person of the ferocious knockout specialist Joe Frazier. The question on all lips was whether Ali, with so many personal, financial and religious problems to distract him over the previous 40

months, still had the stomach for ring combat at that level. "Irish" Jerry Quarry was certainly no pushover. In the aftermath of Ali's being stripped of his crown for refusing the draft, he had only narrowly lost a 15-round points decision against Jimmy Ellis for the World Boxing Association title. A hard counter-puncher, he was at that time ranked No 3 in the world.

In the event, Ali earned a victory at the end of three rounds as blood from a cut caused the referee to rule Quarry unfit to continue. But, though welcomed ecstatically by the former champion's fans, the result contained for the more knowledgeable members of his camp some worrying statistics. Principal among these was that before the clash of heads which caused the cut, Quarry had been dramatically improving the percentage of punches he laid on Ali with every minute the fight went by. In the third Quarry had hurt Ali with body punches and at the end he was far from cowed by him. It was only the sight of his opponent's blood, that at the end pumped fresh life into a rapidly thrashing Ali.

Jerry Quarry was born in Los Angeles into a family of Irish descent. Two of his brothers were to become boxers, one a world title contender as a light heavyweight. He



Under fire: Quarry on the end of a right from Ali on their first meeting in 1970

had a hard childhood as his father, moved from state to state in pursuit of labouring work. But the ring provided him with the means to better himself and after turning

professional he won his first 20 fights before dropping a ten rounds points decision to the highly-fancied Eddie Machen in 1966. In the following year he beat

the former world champion Floyd Patterson on points, thus qualifying himself for the elimination contest to find a successor to Ali, who had by then been stripped of his world title. By this time he was regarded as something of a "white hope" in an era in which black boxers dominated the heavyweight division. In February 1968 Quarry stopped Thad Spencer in three rounds to earn himself a shot at Jimmy Ellis's World Boxing Association title.

In April that year he was narrowly outpointed by Ellis over 15 rounds in Oakland, California, but in June 1969 he was back for another world title tilt, this time at Joe Frazier's World Boxing Council version of the crown. In the event, Frazier stopped him in seven rounds in New York and proceeded to unify the world heavyweight title by hammering Ellis to defeat in four rounds in February 1970.

In October that year Quarry went to Atlanta, Georgia, for his famous meeting with Ali, an encounter which left him feeling aggrieved at his propensity to cut so easily, but by no means daunted at the possibility of meeting Ali again should the opportunity arise. As a contender he was certainly no journeyman, merely to be disposed of by serious men on their way to a title shot.

Indeed, the gulf between a boxer such as he was and Europe's best was harshly

demonstrated at the Empire Pool, Wembley, in November 1971 when he took on the British and European champion, Jack Bodell. Fragrant pre-fight visions of the title opportunities opening up for Bodell should he win were brutally dispelled within seconds of the first bell. Determined to show a fine aggression for the British fans, Bodell floundered gamely forwards but was soon bouncing off the ropes under the sheer savagery of Quarry's punches. Bodell's tactics suited the counter-punching Irish American perfectly, and within a few more seconds a perfect hook to the head had the European champion on his knees. Bodell rose immediately and swung his southpaw right. But it was a move of desperation. Quarry whipped over his own right and Bodell was rolling on the canvas to be counted out. There were 64 seconds on the timekeeper's watch.

Although he continued to challenge in the toughest company, Quarry never really prospered thereafter. He challenged Muhammad Ali again, but was again stopped by cuts, though this time in seven rounds. However in 1973 he had two good wins, outpointing Ron Lyle and then flattening the big-punching Ernie Shavers in one round. He next fought Frazier for the second time but, though Frazier had by then (1974) surrendered his world crown to the even more menacing George Foreman, he was still too strong and too rough for Quarry, and gave the Irish American a severe beating over seven rounds. After a further defeat, at the hands of Ken Norton, Quarry announced his retirement in 1975.

He was several times lured out of retirement — the last time preposterously in 1992 at the age of 47, in the vain belief that he might emulate George Foreman's return to the ring in middle age. For a purse of \$1,050 he was battered senseless over six rounds by a nonentity in an unlicensed club fight.

By that time drink and drugs had, anyway, eroded his powers beyond all recognition, quite apart from the damage he had sustained in the ring. And when he was examined by a neuropsychologist five years ago he was found to be in an advanced state of dementia. Latterly he had been looked after by his mother and elder brother. A younger brother had also suffered fearsome injuries while boxing at light heavyweight.

Quarry was three times married and divorced. He leaves three children.

DOROTHY BARTON

Dorothy Williams Barton, surgeon, died on December 11 aged 100. She was born in Birkenhead on May 14, 1898.

WHEN Dorothy Williams decided to enter the male-dominated world of surgery, it did not occur to her that her sex might be a barrier to success. Years later she was to tell friends that her resolve was strengthened by her father, an insurance broker, who held the then eccentric opinion that daughters should be as well educated as sons.

Her enthusiasm for a career in medicine meant that setbacks only served to sharpen her determination — a characteristic which was put to the test early. At the age of seven, while on holiday on a farm in Herefordshire, she ignored her parents' embargo on playing with machinery and experimented with a threshing machine, severing part of her thumb. As there was no telephone on the farm, she was taken to Hereford in a pony and trap, a journey of ten miles, in the hope of finding the surgeon at home.

The outcome was fortunate. Not only was the surgeon at home, but Dorothy took an immediate liking to him and confided to him that she was going to be a doctor. He replied that, although she had really made quite a good job of the amputation herself, he had better give her some chloroform and tidy it up. She felt he had treated her as an equal.

Dorothy Williams went to a girls' public day school, Birkenhead High, which encouraged pupils to be independent and aim at a career, but only in teaching, which was seen, even by her progressive-minded parents, as the only permissible profession. Medicine, which involved co-education in embarrassing subjects in the company of young men, was "unsuitable for a lady".

By 1917, however, when she was due to go to Cambridge, women doctors were justifying their existence on the battlefields and her parents were prepared to compromise. She could go to Cambridge to study science and, after graduating, could choose between teaching and medicine. She chose anatomy and physiology for two of her sciences, regarding the reference to teaching as a face-saver.

War-time austerities had left their mark on Cambridge and when she arrived at Newnham she found goats grazing on the lawns, tended by the college's biology don. Food was scarce and often unpalatable, and even the vacations were not always holidays. In the summer of 1918 she joined a party of students who went to work on farms in Norfolk, and found herself wearing borrowed breeches, labouring for 12 hours a day, cleaning pig sties, grease-banding fruit trees and sleeping in a rat-infested barn.

With the end of the war the climate of opinion among doctors, and women students encountered difficulties. Ex-servicemen had to be given priority, and some women felt that they faced resentment. Liverpool's hospitals, however, appear to have been an exception, and Williams considered herself fortunate to be working in an environment where women were never

made to feel unwanted, however crowded the classes. She soon learnt "rag-and-bottle anaesthesia" under the encouraging eye of the surgeon.

As soon as she qualified in 1922 she quickly obtained resident posts in medicine, surgery and gynaecology at the Liverpool Royal Infirmary. This meant long hours; on one occasion, she was called out of bed in the middle of the night to cope with a mad ex-serviceman who, in the manner of a sergeant-major, ordered her to "form fours" and made her march up and down the corridors searching for the enemy until a police van arrived and took him away.

In 1925 she married Samuel Barton, a surgeon, gynaecologist, and decided to specialise in eye surgery, so that she could combine her career with family life. Later she became consultant ophthalmic surgeon at St Paul's Eye Hospital, Liverpool, and at Nobles Hospital, Isle of Man.

She retired in 1962 and later moved to Oxford, where she became an expert grower of roses and orchids. Her husband predeceased her, but she is survived by three sons.



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MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MAJESTY'S - Secretary of State. Call 0121 255 1233.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE STATED LAST NIGHT THAT MR. GRAHAM HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO INFORM MR. CHOU EN-LAI AT THE SAME TIME THAT IN CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR DECISION THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD WITHDRAWN RECOGNITION FROM THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT. THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, DR. CHENG TING-CHI, HAS BEEN INFORMED OF THIS DECISION BY MR. HECTOR MCNEIL, MINISTER OF STATE ON TUESDAY EVENING.

FOREIGN OFFICE - Call 0121 255 1233.

THE GOVERNMENT OF CEYLON, IT IS LEARNED, HAS ASKED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO FORWARD

GOVERNMENT OF CEYLON - Call 0121 255 1233.

FROM OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

DIPLOMATIC - Correspondent. Call 0121 255 1233.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S NOTE, IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS, WAS DELIVERED AT 6 O'CLOCK YESTERDAY MORNING TO MR. CHOU EN-LAI, THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT, BY MR. W. GRAHAM, THE BRITISH CONSUL-GENERAL IN PEKING.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT - Call 0121 255 1233.

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO INFORM YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, HAVING COMPLETED THEIR STUDY OF THE SITUATION RESULTING FROM THE FORMATION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, AND OBSERVING THAT IT IS NOW IN EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF BY FAR THE GREATER PART OF THE TERRITORY OF CHINA, HAVE THIS DAY RECOGNIZED THAT GOVERNMENT AS THE DE JURE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT, IN RESPONSE TO CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG'S PROCLAMATION OF OCTOBER 1, 1949, ARE READY TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY, MUTUAL BENEFIT AND MUTUAL RESPECT FOR TERRITORY AND SOVEREIGNTY, AND ARE PREPARED TO EXCHANGE DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES WITH THE CENTRAL PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT.

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(SIGNED) ERNEST BEVIN, HIS BRITANNIC

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THE TIMES

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TODAY



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Bronwen Maddox sees no easy route to car market

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY JANUARY 7 1999

One-day jump is biggest for months

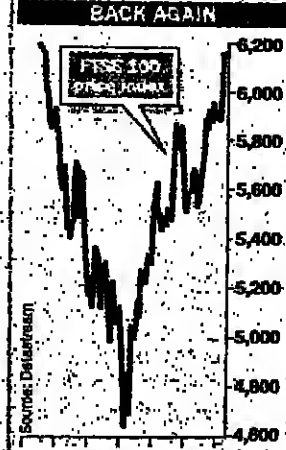
Shares surge to close near record high

By ALASDAIR MURRAY and OLIVER AUGUST

THE London stock market surged close to a record high yesterday as international markets extended their new year rally.

The FTSE 100 index climbed 100.6 points, or 3.2 per cent, to 6,148.8, the highest close since last July. It was the largest one-day climb since October and left the market just shy of the all-time high set on July 20.

Shares advanced despite uncertainty over the outcome of the two-day Monetary Policy Committee meeting which concludes today, with an announcement on interest rates due at midday.



made modest gains yesterday despite a weaker than expected service sector survey by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS). The euro weakened against the pound falling from 71.19p to 70.77p, while on its trade-weighted index sterling closed up 0.5 at 99.2.

The CIPS business activity index fell pointing to a contraction in the service sector for the second month running. New business orders continued to fall, although at a slightly slower rate than in November, with only the computing and IT sector registering significant growth in business.

The employment index also slipped to 49.4, indicating the first decline since the survey began. Price pressures continued with prices falling at their fastest rate for more than two years. Peter Thornton, director general of the CIPS, said: "This survey represents a depressing start to 1999 and no doubt exerts further pressure on the MPC to cut interest rates."

However, the City is divided on whether the Bank will act today or pause until it has seen the Christmas season retail figures and the first estimate of fourth-quarter GDP.

Neil Parker, UK economist at Royal Bank of Scotland, said: "With data continuing to indicate a slight reversal in UK economic fortunes, we think the bank will wait for more data before acting."

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Stock market, page 30

Almost 1.5 billion shares were traded, well ahead of the recent daily average, as investors returned to the market apparently happy that there were no greenlines following the euro conversion weekend. The banking and telecom sectors again led the market higher, as institutional investors rushed to place a wall of excess cash in sectors expected to be the centre of merger activity.

On Wall Street the Dow Jones industrial average moved into record territory, while the main European markets also enjoyed substantial gains to close near their all-time peaks. The Dow soared about 200 points in late trading to clear 9,500 points for the first time. The Nasdaq composite and the Standard & Poor's 500 index also breached records. The market was buoyed by

money flooding in from investors who redress funds in the new US tax year. Strategists also suggested that uncertainty in emerging markets has sent American investors scurrying back to domestic stocks.

Robert Froehlich, chief strategist at Scudder Kemper Investments, said: "This isn't about earnings. It's about dodging a slowdown in the global economy."

The biggest risers included many technology companies, helped by the retail interest in the Internet. Microsoft saw one of the biggest gains.

European markets also made healthy gains on the third day of euro trading. The Dax index in Frankfurt rose more than 3 per cent to reach its highest level since August, while shares in Paris climbed 2.24 per cent. The pound also



Arnault's latest collection? Gucci may come under LVMH banner

Reprimand for Percy over Young debacle

By RICHARD MILES

KEITH PERCY, former chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, has settled his long dispute with the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (Imro) by accepting responsibility for a number of regulatory breaches linked to the Peter Young affair.

Imro yesterday said it had reprimanded Mr Percy for his involvement in the £434 million debacle that led to the suspension of three retail investment funds and the court appearance in November of Mr Young, a former star fund manager, on a charge of conspiracy to defraud investors.

It said Mr Percy had admitted failing to ensure that all reasonable steps were taken to avoid irregular management of two European trusts in April to August 1996. Serious irregularities were later found in the funds and trading was suspended for 72 hours.

At the heart of Imro's charges was the unorthodox 33 per cent holding of unlisted securities by the European Growth unit trust. Mr Percy instigated a review of the portfolio, but "should have done more to satisfy himself personally that the advice and progress reports he was receiving from colleagues were correct", Imro said.

Mr Percy, who, with four other directors, was dismissed by Morgan Grenfell in late 1996, has fought for more than two years against Imro's proposed sanctions. He agreed to accept the charges yesterday so he can make a full return to the City as a director of SG Asset Management.

While unwilling to comment on the breaches, Mr Percy said his experience showed

that, when it came to compliance matters, chief executives "may not be fully entitled to rely on" their management teams. Only by calling in external legal advisers could a chief executive "be protected from the risk of censure by the regulator", he claimed.

One step removed from the direct compliance of the funds, Mr Percy received a reprimand while his four former colleagues — Glyn Owen, Graham Kane, Michael Wheatley and Paul Ebling — received suspensions ranging from 10 months to three years. Mr Wheatley was also banned for life from holding any position in a compliance department.

These four did not seek to challenge Imro's sanctions at tribunal level because of the prohibitive cost — Morgan Grenfell stopped paying their legal fees after paying out £400,000 per person — but Mr Percy was, until yesterday, determined to go to the tribunal. The likely cost, of more than £1 million, is believed to have deterred him, plus there was no guarantee he would win. His personal costs to date are believed to exceed £100,000.

The reprimand ends Imro's involvement in the Peter Young affair, which saw Morgan Grenfell pay £240 million in compensation to an estimated 180,000 investors and a record £2 million in fines. Its parent company, Deutsche Bank, had to spend £180 million buying up some of the unlisted and unapproved stocks in the funds. These proved to be worth just tens of millions.

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Commentary, page 29
System on trial, page 31

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6148.8 (+190.6)
Yield	2.86%
FTSE All Share	2781.31 (+77.22)
Nikkei	13468.46 (+235.72)
New York	
Dow Jones	9482.07 (+150.89)
S&P Composite	1265.20 (+20.42)

US RATE

Federal Funds	4 1/4%	(4 1/4%)
Long bond	100 1/4%	(100 1/4%)
Yield	5.21%	(5.21%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	6%	(6 1/4%)
Life long gilt	119.16	(119.25)
Future (Mar)		

STERLING

New York	1.6548*	(1.6550)
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FOREIGN EXCHANGE

London	1.6583	(1.6585)
Paris	1.4132	(1.4050)
SP	2.2842	(2.2844)
Yen	106.48	(106.70)
Index	99.2	(98.7)

COMMODITIES

Oil	1.1818*	(1.1770)
SP	1.3815*	(1.3720)
Yen	112.72*	(111.38)
S index	103.4	(103.2)

Tokyo close Yen 112.57

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	\$10.90	(\$10.75)
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COMMODITIES

Gold	\$287.45	(\$286.65)
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* denotes midday trading prices

Battle plans

The chief executives of eight of the biggest building societies met yesterday to draw up a plan to combat Michael Hardern, the arch-carpenter, Page 28

BA warning

Cut-throat competition for premium class passengers is hurting BA, forcing the airline to warn investors that weakness in its forward order book was putting pressure on revenues. The airline revealed yesterday that it suffered a decline in premium traffic in spite of overall growth in passenger volumes. Page 29; Tempus 30

Buoyant sales put Next back in good books

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

NEXT bucked the trend for retail gloom yesterday by producing strong Christmas trading figures that sent its shares jumping 9.5 per cent.

The clothing retailer, which fell from its pedestal last March when it issued a surprise profits warning, was being lauded by analysts again after saying that its high street sales in the five months to Christmas Eve were 13.5 per cent higher on 11 per cent more space. In the eight weeks running up to Christmas, sales were up 17 per cent.

Problems afflicting other clothing retailers were highlighted by the British Retail Consortium's shop price index for December, which showed prices 0.6 per cent lower year-on-year, and which pointed to discounting of clothes before Christmas as one reason for

the fall. Many clothing retailers, including Next, started their winter sales a week or so early, worried by poor trade.

David Jones, chief executive, said that the improvement in Next's sales came after it had made necessary changes to its buying and merchandising procedures.

The shares, which were at 835p before last March's profits warning, closed at 922p, up from 513p. Other retailers, including Marks & Spencer, Liberty and Debenhams, also saw their shares rise.

The only black spot for Next was a 2.5 per cent fall in its Direct sales. This was attributed in part to increased competition in catalogue retailing from the likes of Marks & Spencer and Arcadia.

Tempus, page 30

Electricity firm limits bug staff

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

LONDON ELECTRICITY will have just 15 additional staff on standby when the clocks strike midnight to herald the new millennium — despite fears of widespread computer failure.

The company, which has two million customers and serves the crucial sites of the Millennium Dome and Trafalgar Square, normally has 30 staff on standby for emergencies.

It claims there is little risk of failure within its business because of minimal use of time-sensitive equipment. As a precautionary measure it will locate standby staff overnight at selected electricity sub-stations.

The company, which covers 250 square miles, had considered giving troubleshooting millennium staff mountain bikes so they could dash through congested streets, but that has been abandoned. Kevin Morton, the company's asset manager, said: "We are sure of the robustness of the network. It is the most reliable in the country."

Arnault looks at £1.9bn bid for Gucci

By FRASER NELSON

BERNARD ARNAULT, chairman of LVMH, is considering a £1.9 billion takeover bid for Gucci, the Italian fashion house. The bid could be funded via the sale of part of LVMH's £2.6 billion stake in Diageo, the British food and drinks company.

Shares of Gucci jumped by 18 per cent in New York yesterday as it emerged that LVMH has built up a 5 per cent stake. M Arnaud now has until Friday to say whether his interest in the company is friendly, strategic or hostile.

Analysts believe LVMH wants a 51 per cent stake in Gucci, acquiring Prada's 9.5 per cent stake and the 10 per cent stake held by Investcorp in the process.

Since Guinness and Grand Metropolitan merged to form Diageo last year, LVMH has

picked up £250 million in cash in return for voting the deal through, and a further £270 million in a special dividend. It could sell its £2.6 billion stake at a £500 million profit.

In recent months, M Arnaud, who takes pride in LVMH's control of many of the world's most glamorous brands, has consistently expressed his dislike of owning a 10.9 per cent stake in the parent company of Burger King. He left the board two weeks ago.

Shares of Gucci, listed in New York and Amsterdam, have jumped by 75 per cent since bottoming out in September last year. However, it is still 23 per cent off its 1996 peak, when it was valued at £2.75 billion. LVMH, which is quoted in Paris, is capitalised at £14 billion.

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Man with the Midas AirTouch



Ginn: unassuming gentleman

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

SAM GINN, chairman of AirTouch, will reap at least \$150 million (£90 million) from cashing in his share options once the \$45 billion bid battle between Vodafone and Bell Atlantic for control of his company is settled.

The bids already on the table guarantee the unassuming Californian a pay package that would easily outstrip anything seen in the telecoms industry so far.

Under Mr Ginn's steward-

ship, AirTouch shares have more than quadrupled since being floated in 1994. The mobile phone business was spun off from Pacific Telesis.

Mr Ginn, then chairman of Pacific Telesis and initiator of the spin-off, opted to head the fledgling mobile phone business and was rewarded with a sizeable options package. He has been described as an "unassuming gentleman, almost English".

His 2.4 million options are priced between \$20 and \$50 with an average price of about \$25. Vodafone has offered to

pay \$90 for each AirTouch share and analysts said the price could go higher.

Mr Ginn, 61, could stay in control of the US operations if Vodafone won the bid battle but is unlikely to postpone retirement for long. Should Bell Atlantic win, Mr Ginn is expected to stand down.

Last year Mr Ginn received a pay package of \$2 million. To date the highest-paid telecoms executive is Bernie Ebbers, chief executive of WorldCom MCI. After masterminding the takeover of MCI following a bid battle with

BT, Mr Ebbers paid himself an \$18 million bonus last year. It was still not clear yesterday if Bell Atlantic, the US fixed-line and mobile phone group that originally intended to merge with AirTouch, would raise its offer for the company.

Analysts also speculated that British Telecom, Bell South or Mannesmann, the German engineering group with interests in the mobile phone industry, could make a rival offer. However, in the City, Vodafone remained the favourite to clinch the deal.

Northrop warns of 20% fall in profits for 1999

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

NORTHROP Grumman, the US defence company, yesterday gave warning that production cuts meant that 1999 profits will be 20 per cent below forecasts.

The company also announced a \$125 million (£76 million) charge for the fourth quarter of last year to cover the increased cost of building 747 fuselages for Boeing.

Northrop said sales for the coming year would be marginally higher than last year at about \$9 billion. Previously the company had forecast revenues of \$9.3 billion.

The announcement is a new low for Northrop. The company was the focus of a takeover bid last year from Lockheed Martin, which would have created the world's largest defence and aerospace group. However, the merger was blocked by regulators, leaving Northrop hamstrung.

GEC had expressed an interest in buying parts of Northrop but the company has since switched its attention to the ongoing restructuring of the European defence industry.

The main reason for Northrop's slowdown is Boeing's decision to scale back production. The world's biggest aerospace group has been hit by production problems and falling orders in Asia, previously its strongest market.

Boeing has reduced production of its flagship 747 from 35 a month to only two. This marks a reversal of the company's original expansion plans for the late 1990s.

Overall, the cutbacks will reduce Northrop's revenue by \$350 million rather than the \$150 million that the company had forecast in December. Extra costs were also incurred by delayed testing of an infrared countermeasure system for US and UK defence forces.

Societies join forces to fight Hardern's conversion tactics

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

THE chief executives of eight of the biggest building societies met yesterday to draw up a plan to combat Michael Hardern, the arch-carpetbagger.

Mr Hardern, the eccentric former Royal banker, is attempting to force six of the eight societies to float, via a special resolution. He is also putting himself up for election to the societies' boards.

The societies under siege are the Britannia, Portman, Leeds & Holbeck, Chelsea, Skipton and Yorkshire. Mr Hardern put a similar resolution to the

Coventry, but the society said earlier this week that both the resolution and his proposal for election to the board had been rejected because they had not received the requisite level of support from the society's membership.

The eighth society represented at the meeting was the UK's second biggest, the Bradford & Bingley, which was forced to close to new savers earlier this week because it is also under attack from a carpetbagger, Stephen Major. Mr Major is hoping to force the Bradford & Bingley to float by submitting a special conversion resolution

to be considered at its annual meeting on April 26.

The societies are to seek legal opinion about whether they could use a ruling made 25 years ago, in the case of Hickmott versus the Woolwich Equitable, to block Mr Hardern's resolution. Under the ruling societies can refuse to put a resolution to members if it interferes with the day-to-day running of the business.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the Building Societies Association, said: "The boards of all the societies targeted are fully committed to their mutual status. Following appropriate

professional advice each board will discuss the matter further to be certain they are acting consistently with their rules in the interest of their current and future members."

Mr Hardern has in two consecutive years failed to get on to the board of the Nationwide Building Society. Last year, a resolution put forward by Mr Hardern attempting to force the Nationwide to convert was defeated by the narrowest of margins.

Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday advised building societies not to feel threatened by

proposals to convert them into banks and said it was a healthy sign of democracy and competition.

She said the process was part of the "democratic ethos" of building societies which allowed members to have a say on their future.

Last year Ms Hewitt pledged to increase the "turn-over threshold" for a vote on conversion from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. "What would be wrong would be to prevent members from trying to come forward at all with a conversion proposal," she told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.



Oliver Whitehead, chief executive, expects Alfred McAlpine's improved land bank to be reflected in better potential margins

Alfred McAlpine confident

BY ADAM JONES

SHARES in Alfred McAlpine, the housebuilder and construction group, rose yesterday after a confident trading statement.

McAlpine said that its final results for 1998, due to be announced in March, will be in line with expectations. Analysts had been forecasting pre-tax profits of about £34 million, with earnings per share

of about 22p, up from 18.3p last year.

McAlpine said that the operating margin for its homes division in 1998 had exceeded the group's target. The company's trading statement added: "We have coded the year with a higher-quality land bank, both in terms of site locations and potential future margins."

However, Oliver Whitehead, chief executive, said the recent cuts in mortgage rates have not yet led to a full recovery in buyer confidence, which was hit during the second half of 1998 by redundancies and predictions of recession.

He said: "Joe Public has, for six to eight months, been fed a diet of redundancies and

bad news. It will take a while to restore confidence." McAlpine expects the UK housing market to remain "steady" in 1999.

The company also said that its construction services division continued to improve in 1998, maintaining a focus on higher-margin projects.

The shares closed up 7 1/2p at 156 1/2p.

LucasVarity price lifted by talks statement

BY PAUL DURMAN

SHARES in LucasVarity yesterday rose to their highest since August as the maker of car components confirmed that it is considering combining its business with a number of other companies.

However, LucasVarity's response to speculation linking it to TRW and Tenneco, its American rivals, was couched in very broad terms, and gave no clue about the nature of any deal that may emerge. The company, recently thwarted by a shareholder vote in its plan to move to the US, is not thought to be near agreeing a merger or joint venture.

Nicholas Jones, a spokesman, said the discussions are preliminary, involving several companies, and embracing "a wide range of strategic alternatives, including joint ventures, acquisitions, dispositions, alliances and mergers or other combinations".

Although the statement let the City conclude little, the shares rose 11 1/2p to 226 1/2p.

Victor Rice, LucasVarity's chief executive, still believes moving its domicile to the US would bring commercial benefit, but a US merger or reverse takeover would be unpopular with some UK shareholders who would see it as a backdoor way of going to the US.

Booker sheds 200 at division head office

BOOKER, the deeply troubled food business, is shedding 200 managers at the head office of its cash and carry division. Stuart Rose, chief executive of Booker, said that the job cuts will effectively reduce the head count by more than 15 per cent at Booker Belmont Wholesale's headquarters at Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. He said: "It is a necessary cost-cutting exercise." The division as a whole employs more than 10,000 people. Mr Rose said that he could not put a total on the cost of the redundancies.

Mr Rose, who has put Booker's food service and wholesale food businesses on the market, said that talks are poised to carry on into the spring with the heavily indebted group's banks over refinancing. He added: "The banks are fully supportive but we will need new finance. The amount will depend on the business disposals. We are now actively marketing them."

EDS creates 1,000 jobs

EDS, the US information technology group, is to create up to 1,000 jobs in Sheffield at its new services delivery centre. The centre will initially employ 300 IT staff, most of whom are being transferred from the Employment Service, and will start taking on trainees from April. The news comes as Alan Stephens, chief executive of EDS in the UK, is appointed as head of an industry-led task force to promote skills in the IT and communications industry. The group is being backed by the Department of Education and Employment and will form part of the National Skill Task Force and draw on the Department of Trade and Industry's Information Age Partnership.

Albright slows further

ALBRIGHT & WILSON, the specialty chemicals company, yesterday said that it had suffered a further slowdown in activity in its surfactants businesses in the second half and a continuation of aggressive competition in phosphates. The company, which issued its end-of-year trading statement after stock market trading had ended, said that its focus on cash management resulted in curtailed capital investment and a substantial reduction in working capital. Albright shares yesterday ended 1 1/2p down at 63p, their lowest level since the company's 1995 flotation.

Sales record by Jaguar

JAGUAR, the luxury car company, achieved record sales in 1998. For the first time in its 76-year history, the Coventry company sold more than 50,000 vehicles worldwide in a single year. The figures came shortly before an expected announcement that UK new car sales for 1998 reached about 2.23 million — not far short of the annual record set in 1989. Jaguar's record year included UK sales of 11,640 — a 22 per cent increase on 1997. Total Jaguar sales worldwide last year reached 50,220 — a 15 per cent rise on the 1997 figure and 2 per cent more than the previous record set in 1988.

Union tribunal success

UNIONS helped to win £11.5 million compensation for workers at employment tribunals last year. The TUC said that union members were twice as likely to be successful as non-members and usually won higher compensation levels. Unions helped to win cases or achieve a compromise in three out of four claims, a TUC survey found. More unions took cases to employment appeal tribunals last year on legal grounds, showing that they have developed a better understanding of the law, said the TUC.

Wetherspoon cheers

PUB chain JD Wetherspoon raised a cheer after announcing like-for-like sales in the last quarter of last year up by at least 5 per cent. The figures buck the trend in a sector that has been struggling to maintain beer sales. While operators such as Bass and Whitbread have scaled back expansion programmes, Wetherspoon is to spend £100 million opening 80 pubs this year — 10 per cent more than it previously forecast. Wetherspoon has created a traditional atmosphere at all of its 306 managed pubs, where it bans music and television.

Greenspan meeting

ALAN GREENSPAN, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, is to attend a meeting of central bankers in Hong Kong early next week. Representatives from Asian and some other central banks are due to meet in Hong Kong on Sunday and Monday under the auspices of the Swiss-based Bank for International Settlements. The agenda will include a review of the global economy and bank restructuring. Hong Kong, which was a British colony for 156 years, reverted to Chinese rule in 1997 and was soon hit by Asia's financial turmoil.

GEC shares surge

GEC shares surged yesterday in anticipation of a big defence merger with British Aerospace or an alliance with a US or French partner. The stock closed up 17 1/2p at 573p, close to its record of 580p. Its Marconi Communications subsidiary also announced that it has won a \$47 million (£28.3 million) contract from Boeing to modernise the Airborne Warning and Control System (Awacs) aircraft operated by Nato. The contract is for the development of an "interrogator" that identifies friends or foes in the air. Installation is expected to start in December.

Small factory risks

WORKERS in small factories have a relatively high risk of serious and fatal injuries. A Health and Safety Executive study found that rates of injuries that lead to death or amputation occurring in small factories — those with fewer than 50 workers — are double those in large workplaces, with 200 or more workers. Major injuries, requiring medical treatment, are about 25 per cent more frequent in small workplaces. However, the HSE said the rate of minor injuries, mainly leading to four or more days' absence, is lowest in small workplaces.

Microsoft attacks witness over 'inconsistency'

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AMERICA'S Justice Department has concluded its parade of witnesses in the Microsoft trial with the testimony of a respected economist who helped IBM to beat a similar anti-trust case 20 years ago.

Franklin Fischer, a professor at MIT in Boston, said Microsoft fitted the textbook description of a monopolist and was clearly guilty of using its monopoly power to squeeze competitors out of the market.

Mr Fischer testified that the tactics employed by Bill Gates, the Microsoft chairman, were illegal and regulators should not accept such behaviour in the interest of consumers.

He said: "Microsoft has engaged in anti-competitive conduct that has no compelling economic justification but for its effect of restricting competition. This situation can never make consumers better off than they would be with unfettered competition."

Microsoft responded by attacking him for inconsistency. Mr Fischer was one of the architects of IBM's defence strategy

in the first epic anti-trust battle of the computer industry. Then, as now, he worked with David Bates, who is lead counsel for the Justice Department.

In 1983 Mr Fischer published a book called *Foiled, Spindled and Mutilated* that summarised the intellectual argument successfully put forward by IBM. He wrote: "Conduct that brings profitable higher sales cannot be anti-competitive, regardless of how uncomfortable it makes competitors."

Microsoft tried to use Mr Fischer's book to discredit him on the witness stand. It said: "Professor Fischer's testimony would give readers of his 1983 book whiplash."

Mr Fischer struck back by calling Microsoft's behaviour towards Netscape, its competitor in the Internet browser market, "predatory". He is a crucial witness because unlike others, he is not employed by a Microsoft competitor or supplier.

Microsoft will present its defence witnesses starting next week.

Law Society to rule on indemnity cover monopoly

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

LARGE City and national legal firms will learn within weeks whether they have succeeded in breaking the Law Society's monopoly in supplying professional indemnity (PI) insurance to the industry.

Their campaign will come to a head when the 75 members of the full council of the Law Society meet on January 23.

The firms have obtained a legal opinion on the issue from the Honourable Michael Beloff, QC, which they believe has strengthened their case considerably. Mr Beloff said yesterday he believed the Law

Society's monopoly restricted and distorted competition under European law.

The legal firms argue that they should be allowed to buy PI insurance in the free market. Fees for compulsory cover rose sharply last year.

Discussions, known as the November Meeting Group (NMG), claim they are being charged more in order to make up a shortfall in the Law Society's mutual insurance fund. This fund, known as the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund (SIF) has a deficit of £432 million.

The Law Society has com-

missioned its own report by Aon, the insurer, which will be made public at the council meeting. Aon will recommend that insurance firms pay a levy to underpin the mutual fund, and that SIF be allowed to continue to underwrite risks alongside commercial firms.

In the statement published yesterday by the NMG, Mr Beloff advised that there were "strong grounds" for arguing that the Law Society's rules stopped European insurance companies offering equivalent cover to solicitors in England, and Wales.

Australia	2.72	2.84
Belgium	20.20	20.20
Canada	2.615	2.615
Cyprus	0.0665	0.0665
Denmark	11.12	10.23
Egypt	8.84	8.21
France	9.74	8.89
Germany	2.837	2.837
Greece	12.85	12.85
Hong Kong	12.85	12.85
India	1.671	1.671
Indonesia	1.671	1.671
Japan	201.80	184.07
Korea	0.859	0.859
Malaysia	3.25	3.00
Netherlands	2.837	2.837
New Zealand	2.837	2.837
Norway	2.837	2.837
Spain	10.05	10.05
Sweden	2.837	2.837
Switzerland	2.837	2.837
Taiwan	2.837	2.837
USA	1.671	1.671

Notes: For annual declaration of intent only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Rates apply to transfer of deposits. Rates of exchange of trading currency.

PRIZE DRAW AND READER OFFER THE TIMES

THE MACALLAN INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP

Book now for the chance to win 10 Years Old Malt whisky

The 28th Macallan International Bridge Pairs Championship, held in association with *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, opens in London on Wednesday, January 20. Readers who buy tickets for this three-day event, featuring 32 of the world's best bridge players, have the chance to win a six-bottle case of The Macallan 10 Years Old Malt whisky, or one of six bottles in its prize draw.

The championship, with prizes worth £11,000, is regarded by many as the most prestigious in the bridge calendar. Among those taking part will be Omar Sharif, Bob Hamman, the world's highest-ranked player, the world senior pairs champions Boris Schapiro and Irving Gordon and top women's pair Sabine Aukun and Daniela von Arnim. Bidding to become only the second pair to successfully defend their title will be the Norwegians Tor Helness and Geir Helgemo and for the first time a Chinese pair, Zhuang Zejun and Xu Hongjun, will take part in the tournament.

The Macallan International Bridge Pairs Championship will be staged at The White House Hotel, Albany Street, London NW1, on January 20, 21 and 22. To order tickets specify the session(s) you would like to attend and send a cheque, payable to The Macallan Distillers Ltd, with your details, including daytime telephone number, to: The Macallan Box Office, 31 Queen's Rd, London SW14 8PH. Enclose a sae. To enter the draw include your answer to this question: Who are the World Senior Pairs Champions? Applications must arrive by first post Wednesday, January 13, 1999.

TICKET PRICES

To attend all sessions over the three days: £25
Wednesday, January 20, 5.30pm-11pm: £12.50
Thursday, January 21, 12noon-4pm: £12.50
Thursday, January 21, 5.30pm-11pm: £12.50
All day Thursday: £20
Friday, January 22, 1.30pm-7pm: £17.50
More details at: www.mal.co.uk/macallan/



Omar Sharif and Boris Schapiro



The MACALLAN

CHANGING TIMES

مكتبة زليخا

Old Lady struggles to keep up



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

New year, same old market. How can the members of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee concentrate on warding off the threat of a deep recession when stock market investors are busy pushing the FTSE 100 with-in touching distance of its all-time high? The international financial crisis last autumn now seems a distant bad memory; the accelerating downturn in the domestic economy a figment of bearish imaginations.

Institutional investors who shied away from shares during the run-up to euro trading are now desperate for exposure to what is becoming another record-breaking rally. Never mind the fundamentals, they do not want to miss the fun. Rarely has the distance between the stock market and the Old Lady seemed so far.

The Bank has boarded a rate-cutting cycle that the market believes will soon take rates down to levels not seen since the 1960s. Inflation control remains the official target but it is clear that the MPC has more than half an eye on vanishing growth prospects. As the Chartered Institute of Purchasing Surveys' December service sector report revealed yesterday, growth has even disappeared from the previously robust service sector, which now appears well on the way to its own technical recession. The tight labour market conditions that worried

the Bank for much of last year have been replaced by job losses.

Only the consumer apparently stands between the Bank and another half-point rate cut today. Expenditure on items such as mobile phones has stormed ahead — an important sectoral factor behind the FTSE's sharp rise yesterday. Even the performance in the high street, though poor, may prove to have been not as dire as some gloom-merchants had predicted. Next, the clothing group, turned in a robust trading statement yesterday, albeit from a low base. Retailers moaning about their pre-Christmas sales have become as permanent a feature of the season as mistletoe and mince pies. It happened last year, when the economy was moving ahead with full steam. Only retailers and advertisers inhabit a world where everyone does their Christmas shopping in November. Consumers were careful but they did spend. As ever, the rush came late, and it was far from evenly spread. Panic discounting ensured that many stores saw margins evaporate in far from festive mode.

The City believes that the mixed consumer evidence may persuade the Bank not to take ac-

tion again today, or at best reduce rates by a quarter point. Yet consumer spending tends to lag the rest of the economy with workers still banking last year's decent pay rise and not yet feeling the full impact from rising unemployment. The evidence from the rest of the economy is that the Bank is barely managing to keep up with the downward spiral. The stock market, in contrast, appears determined to ignore it.

Wolfson goes in for panel-beating

Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale is a leading member of Business for Sterling, an organisation that wishes to protect a venerable British institution, namely the pound, from being rendered extinct by the on-ward march of Europe. Yet in his attack on the Takeover Panel, the GUS chairman appears ready to mortally damage another vener-

able British institution which has its own problems resisting the deathly embrace of Europe.

And why? To prove that he was not merely overgenerous in paying £1.9 billion for Argos, but that he was duped by a combination of Schroders and Stuart Rose, who is now battling to save another British institution, Book-cr. The famous one-eyed Albanian could have told GUS that Argos's Dutch business was virtually worthless, but, apparently, GUS and its advisers chose to base their valuation on the rather more optimistic views of Argos and its advisers.

Wolfson argues that the panel was wrong not to uphold the original complaint that GUS made against Argos and Schroders. He appealed to the executive of the panel, a 15-strong body headed by Alistair Defriez, the director-general, who is on secondment from Warburg Dillon Read, and 11 other members on secondment from City firms. The executive

threw out the appeal. However, Wolfson was not satisfied, and appealed to the full Takeover Panel on the basis that Mr Defriez was in a similar position to Lord Hoffman in deciding the fate of General Pinochet, since Warburg Dillon Read was Argos's broker. The panel has accepted this appeal out of a sense of fair play. Whether or not it now grants Lord Wolfson the public rebuke of his opponents that he seeks, it has entered dangerous territory.

First, if Defriez could be said to have had one conflict of interest, he actually had two. Warburg is also GUS's financial adviser, but stood aside on the Argos bid because of its relationship with the target company.

Secondly, and more importantly, this challenge assumes that a professional organisation cannot be trusted to act independently. This destroys the principle on which the panel has worked for

30 years, a principle that has saved the London market from statutory regulation and vexatious litigation.

Defriez and co seemed close to persuading Brussels that the panel is an efficient and effective mechanism. Now Lord Wolfson is questioning its very essence.

Danger for funds in Percy precedent

Keith Percy's reprimand from Imro may superficially look like a swipe from a wet lettuce leaf, given that he is now back in business with former colleague Nicola Horlick at SG Asset Management. But the long, drawn-out Imro proceedings, costly in emotional as well as financial terms, amount to a high price to be exerted from someone whom Imro accepts was not guilty of dishonesty or lack of integrity.

Mr Percy may be drawing an extreme scenario when he says that Imro's ruling indicates that no chief executive will be safe without his own legal advisers to hand at every stage but, if relying on the advice of his own compliance department is not sufficient to avoid cen-

sure, then the risk is that chief executives will be pushed towards taking outside advice. Such second guessing is not only expensive but damaging to trust within an organisation.

The goings on at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management were extraordinary. Those who failed to prevent Peter Young's antics may have deserved to lose their jobs. Yet those taking responsible positions in the City may think more than twice before laying themselves open to the costs of the legal battles that Mr Percy and his colleagues faced. In the professions, people usually enjoy the benefits of professional indemnity insurance. On the Percy precedent, fund managers may soon come under pressure to offer similar comfort to their top people.

Victor's gambit

VICTOR RICE failed to persuade shareholders of LucasVarity that he should be allowed to move the company's base to the United States, conveniently close to his home. But he is a man of immense determination, not to be outdone by a bare majority of investors. He now admits that he is intent on exploring deals that will enhance the future of the company, whether by joint venture, merger or acquisition. The chances that these explorations might stretch into euroland, instead of the US, seem slight.



Taking flight: BA revenue has suffered because of fewer premium class passengers, lured by competitive rival airlines

BA feels the pressure as competition bites

By CARL MORTIMER, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

CUT-THROAT competition for first class and business passengers is hurting British Airways, and forcing the airline to warn investors yesterday that weakness in its forward order book was putting pressure on revenues.

The airline suffered a decline in premium traffic in spite of overall growth in passenger volumes. The company said it was too early to comment on 1999 bookings but took the unusual step of warning: "Forward bookings point to a continuing softness in the market, particularly in premium traffic. This is putting heavy pressure on yields."

Traffic figures for December show that BA is getting its share of overall air traffic growth with a 10.5 per cent

rise in revenue passenger kilometres. However it carried almost 4 per cent fewer first and club class passengers.

Air transport analysts reckon that the industry earns as much as 30 per cent of its income from 5 per cent of passengers, those at the front end of the aircraft.

BA yesterday added to investor misery by revealing that profits for the third quarter to December would be hit by the strength of the yen. The company has £127 billion (£68 billion) in uncovered Japanese debt to finance aircraft leases. Leasing in Japan carries tax and low interest advantages but an 18 per cent fall in sterling against the yen will increase the interest charge on the loans. While current cash-

flow is unaffected, BA is forced to take a £117 million charge to its third-quarter profits.

Analysts were bemused yesterday by the sight of BA shares drifting upwards with the market.

BA has enlisted its entire workforce in an attempt to claw back premium class passengers lured to rival airlines. Even cabin crew have been corralled into battle and asked to call on small firms and deliver the BA sales pitch.

A spokesman for the company said that BA had reshaped its aircraft order book, cancelling 747s and replacing them with 777s in line with the new strategy. The latter aircraft will have a smaller proportion of economy seats.

BA confirmed yesterday

that it was in talks with JAL which could lead to the Japanese airline joining BA's One World Alliance. A spokesman said that no decision had been made but links in the form of code-sharing and frequent-flyer programmes could be on the agenda.

BA already has a link with ANA, JAL's rival, which manages BA's frequent-flyer programme for Japanese customers. However, ANA has announced plans to join the rival Star Alliance with Lufthansa. The move by ANA has forced BA to seek a different partner. The British airline has been keen to find a partner in Japan which accounts for the bulk of air traffic in East Asia.

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BP moves advertising account

BP has moved its advertising account, which is worth more than £10 million a year, from Saatchi & Saatchi to its arch-rival M&C Saatchi in the wake of its merger with Amoco (Jason Nisse writes).

Ads proclaiming the creation of BP Amoco, with the slogan "1 Do", will appear today in newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Saatchi & Saatchi has been in charge of BP's worldwide advertising for more than a decade, promoting the oil giant as a caring organisation that helped people in far flung parts of the world.

The move will be embarrassing for Saatchi & Saatchi, which has lost the British Airways, Mirror Group and Dixons accounts to M&C since the Saatchi brothers left to form a new agency five years ago.

Wolfson wins right to challenge panel

By FRASER NELSON

LORD WOLFSON, chairman of Great Universal Stores, has won an appeal to challenge the structure of the Takeover Panel in a final attempt to prove he was misled during his company's £1.9 billion bid for Argos (See Commentary, this page).

His case centres on accusations that Alistair Defriez, director-general of the Takeover Panel, should not have handled an initial appeal by GUS because he is on secondment from Warburg Dillon Read, which acted as adviser to Argos.

If the latest appeal is successful, it would rewrite the 30-year-old structure of the Takeover Panel, which is staffed by directors on secondment from the City.

Lord Wolfson, whose case has already been rejected by the Takeover Panel twice, is invoking what his advisers describe as the "Pinochet Prin-



Wolfson: Pinochet Principle

ple" because of the conflict of interest. GUS said: "This is the fundamental right against bias — exactly the same principle as the Pinochet case. The panel have rejected us twice, and their director-general will be going back to work for Argos's adviser."

Mr Defriez said: "The idea

that Takeover Panel members sit and argue cases from the viewpoints of their financial institutions is, in my opinion, a load of nonsense but that's by-the-by."

"GUS has appealed, and we will hear it because we uphold fairness and fair play."

Lord Wolfson particularly takes issue with a footnote on Argos's main defence document of April 3 saying: "Five stores were opened in Holland and initial sales are above expectations."

GUS says it has documents which prove that, on March 28, Argos knew that the stores were trading 11 per cent behind expectations. It also claims Argos gave a misleading Easter trading statement. The former advisers to Argos reject all these claims.

Sir David Calcutt, chairman of the panel, will consider Lord Wolfson's claims with nine other executives.

Alchemy blames Allied Carpets as talks collapse

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

ALLIED CARPETS' takeover talks ended in acrimony yesterday as Alchemy, the venture capitalist that had been interested in buying the carpet retailer, alleged that it had not been given enough information by Allied's management to allow it to make a formal bid.

Allied, which was first approached by Alchemy in mid-September, said that "after extensive reviews of the business and despite full co-operation from the management", no formal bids had emerged.

Jon Moulton, Alchemy's managing partner, said that this was "a fairly vigorous overstatement", and complained that Allied had made "talks go at a snail's pace". Mr Moulton said: "We never made an offer because we always want to know the solidity

of its financial position first." Allied countered that it had given Alchemy all necessary financial details, and complained that Alchemy had now breached its confidentiality agreement.

Allied, which parted company with its finance director and its head of retail operations last year after accounting irregularities were uncovered, said that it had been in talks with more than one possible buyer. The sale of its Carpetland stores to Carpetright, its main rival, for £12 million is to be completed on Monday.

Allied shares yesterday slumped 7p to 41p, near to their low. They were trading at 32p two years ago.

Julian Lee, Allied's chairman, said that it wanted to focus on improving its sales and cutting its overhead costs.

Allied Textiles directors opt to sacrifice pay rise

By FRASER NELSON

THE nine directors of Allied Textiles are to forego a pay rise after presiding over its sharpest revenue decline since 1980.

John Corrin, who gave up an attempt to take the Yorkshire clothmaker private last year, said the entire board has refused a pay rise averaging 5 per cent.

The decision came as Allied confirmed that its turnover dropped by 11 per cent over the year to £207 million after a disastrous performance from its woollen textiles.

However, Mr Corrin will receive £253,000 from the generous 52 per cent increase in dividend that the company decided to pay from the £4.8 million profit on property disposals.

Mr Corrin and three other directors own 7.25 per cent of the shares and will collect

£660,000 between them. Last year the dividend brought them £434,000 each.

Martin Towers, who has now replaced Gerald Wrightman as finance director, said: "We don't see the pay cuts as a big deal. This is not a far-east company; we know how difficult trading conditions are and we simply don't think we could justify a pay rise in these conditions."

The City was relieved there were no further shocks in the results, and the shares added 4p to 115p.

After the property disposal sales, pre-tax profits were £16.5 million (£16.3 million) and earnings were 18.7p (16.6p) a share. The dividend is 12.85p (8.1p) with a final 10p due on April 6.

Tempos, page 30

SATURDAY.
ANYTHING
BUT A DAY
OF REST.

SPORT
Vision
WEEKEND
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THE TIMES

UK must play fantasy global league

At this week, the world's stock markets have been convulsed with rumours of global car mergers. At least the telecom sector, the other focus of investor mania, has seen real, if non-euro action.

The UK, while thrilling to the adventures of Vodafone, has almost alone been immune from this motor epidemic. The wheeled marital square dance has been an instant rerun of the birth of the euro. It is terribly exciting and important but we are on the outside looking in.

To our lasting industrial shame, Britain has long since been scratched from the world motor stakes. In the 1960s there were still half a dozen wholly British motor manufacturers worth the name. Now there are none.

Even fringe players such as Rolls-Royce Motors have been sold to foreign companies. Lacking the ability and the will to invest, the UK is simply not a player in this key global industry, as in others such as consumer electronics. We must live with this legacy of industrial, managerial and political fail-

ure. Much of value has been built from the wreckage in the past 15 years. By tackling labour anarchy, inflation, useless boards, and others of the ills that ground us down, we have turned Britain into an attractive centre for carmaking.

Three Japanese groups have started up here from scratch. BMW is investing billions in Rover. France's Peugeot has made a success of a shrunken Rover plant in Coventry. Even Halewood in Merseyside, the unplanned, prodigious son in Ford's family of plants, has unexpectedly saved itself. UK production and exports have recovered well, even if the motor trade is never likely to regain past glories.

Some of our strengths should endure beyond mere cost advantage. While British firms have ultimately failed, we have in Land-Rover, Jaguar and Rolls-Royce three of the most attractive upmarket

brand names in world motoring. The limitations of being an attractive European platform for foreign multinationals are already being exposed by our self-exclusion from the euro. They are underlined by the merger fever set off by the bipolar DaimlerChrysler.

In the UK, we are free to play the fantasy motor league. If America can sustain only two entirely home-grown global car companies, because of the economics of manufacturing, design and marketing, surely neither Europe nor Japan can manage more. Toyota and VW look fairly sure of their places in the world league. Most of the remaining dozen must either form cross-country mergers on the DaimlerChrysler model, fortify their own niches or be taken over.

Only the time-scale and the feasible cultural affinities are in doubt. You can see Fiat doing business



GRAHAM SEALTEANT

with like-minded Mitsubishi but not a Franco-Japanese alliance. Will Volvo or BMW sell out?

Fun though this game of happy families is, the British reality is harsh. We are anxious spectators, not actors. Many of our key plants, especially Longbridge, Cowley and Sunderland, are mere pawns in games to be played by others.

We need to learn the lessons. Making Britain a cheap, easy place to do business is a survival strategy.

If our people are skilled, our taxes and wages are low, our employment laws are investor-friendly and our currency either merged into the euro or kept internationally competitive, then the UK should earn a decent share of the jobs going in global industries. That framework is a key target for government. But it is not enough.

If we are to gain strength, let alone lead Europe in prosperity, then Britain needs to host and control as many of the top global corporations as it can. Smaller businesses may be the vital innovators and job creators, but a vibrant team of global corporations will give us the best and safest jobs, create the spin-offs into service industries and deliver reliable wealth. Motors and consumer electron-

ics may be lost causes. Oil and pharmaceuticals are strong sectors we can be proud of, and will stay that way if our role in these industries is cherished in public attitudes and government policy.

In many other industries, all is to play for. In a potentially long list, telecommunications, defence, airlines, banking, insurance, broadcasting and food manufacturing all spring readily to mind.

France's obsession with national champions does not suit our ways. UK champions must choose themselves. Via the marketplace. But we should not be as naive in such matters as we have been. French and Italian protection for motor manufacturers has worked. The weakness of Japanese corporations and the break-up of Korean conglomerates are not accidents but triumphs of US policy.

In defence, ministers have a

pressing and crucial part to play to make sure that at least one of the world-class groups to emerge from restructuring is under British control and leadership. In other industries, we take a blinkered local approach, seemingly unable to combine consumer interest with industrial vision.

Electricity and gas firms have been hobbled by structural attack from regulators. British Telecom, more important in global terms, is in danger of succumbing to domestic sabotage. We fail to protect our branded food manufacturers from passing off by supermarkets. Even British Airways, which is unusually favoured, has been strategically disabled by our failure to tackle US protectionism.

On our behalf, the Cabinet should have the vision to take a few risks with short-term consumer interest to make sure that British firms become long-term players in global competition. Sitting around wondering who is going to shut which of our motor factories is not just humiliating. It is also lousy economics.

Single currency offers no easy route to European car market



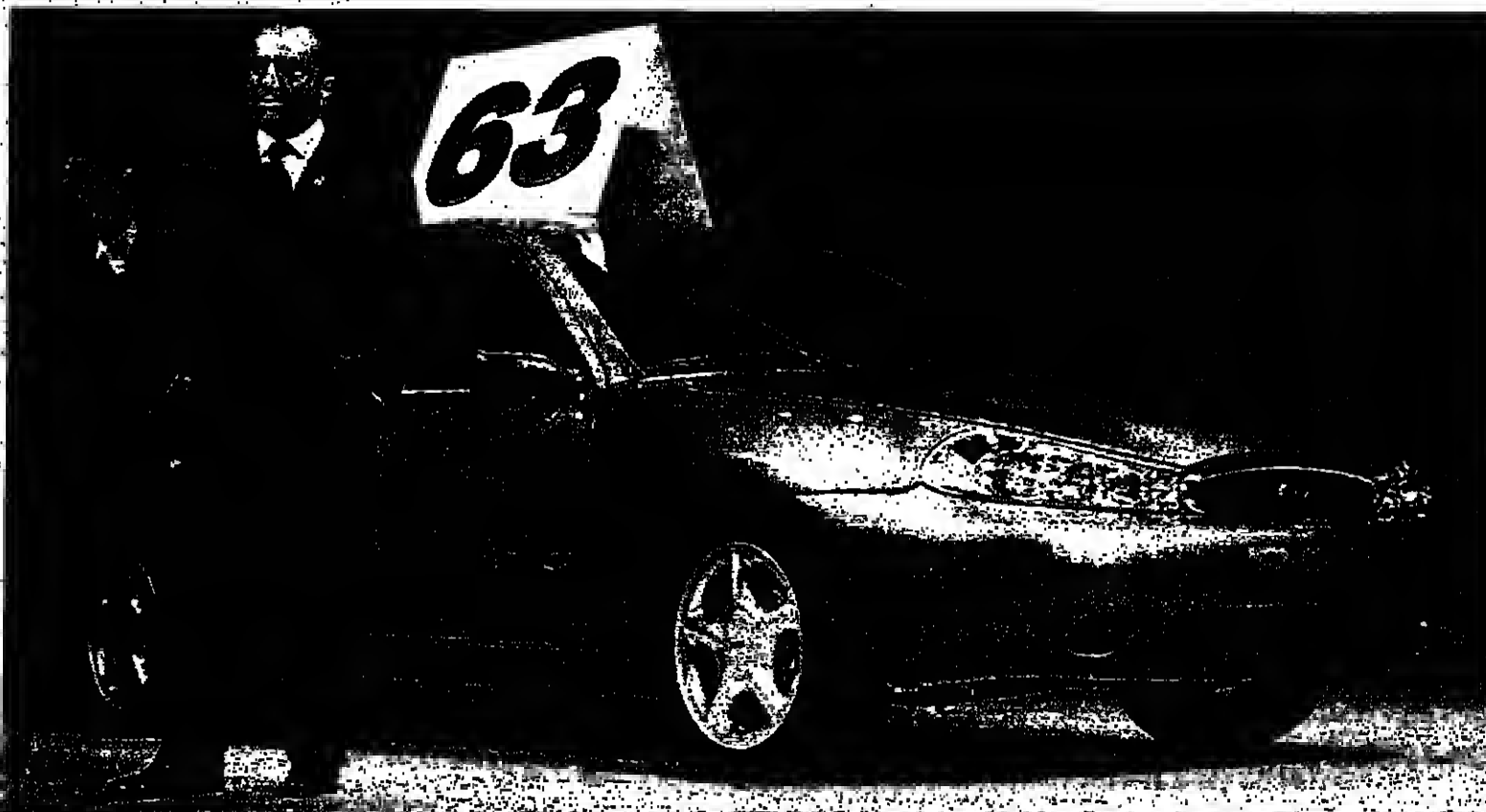
AMERICAN AGENDA
BRONWEN MADDOX

As denials go, it was forthright. Ford Motor, the American car group that has been one focus of the frenzy of merger speculation at the Detroit show this week, has emphatically denied that it is about to buy either BMW or Honda. Jac Nasser, Ford's chief executive officer, called the suggestion "preposterous". At the same time, chatter that Fiat will announce an alliance, which has bubbled on for years, has reached a new bout on rumours of an imminent pact, with Volvo. Nor were these suggestions roundly dismissed.

"Everybody is talking to everybody," Paolo Cantarella, Fiat's managing director, has said, with gusto. Such rumours are the stuff of Detroit, refined and modified each year to suit the current business fashion. Yet the chatter this week has contained a curious mixture of contradiction and overoptimism.

It has also been stirred further by the excitement over the launch of the euro, attracting enthusiastic predictions from President Clinton and sundry chiefs of corporate America about the era of European prosperity now beginning.

For sure, more giant mergers are likely to happen. But the growth in European sales, which many assume will follow could still be elusive. The fuel for the gossip, of course, is last year's \$40 billion creation of the transatlantic giant DaimlerChrysler. To many in the industry, that made the formation of huge international partnerships a matter of urgency. Executives have vied with each other to predict how many of the world's 20-odd leading car manufacturers



Glibbed gossip: Jac Nasser dismissed as "preposterous" suggestions at the Detroit motor show that Ford is about to link up with Honda or BMW

will still exist in a decade's time. Jürgen Schrempf, Daimler chairman, says only ten; Ford's Alex Trotman famously says just five. DaimlerChrysler's Robert Eaton predicts a big European merger within three months.

True, consolidation makes sense. It has done for years, given the pressures on the industry. For several years, worldwide overcapacity and savage competition have pushed down prices, making the days of annual price rises a fading dream. This year there is new pressure on sales from the collapse in emerging markets. But the consolidation of the global car markets remains one of those long-predicted business earthquakes that never quite happens. Each manufacturer has continued to hope, against the evidence, that it can gain share at the expense of others, without simultaneously eroding its return on capital. Whether it does will depend partly on the as-yet-unproven success of the DaimlerChrysler merger. The difficul-

ties of fusing the two cultures — which continue to be managed from separate headquarters in Stuttgart and Michigan — have been widely flagged.

In Detroit, it seemed that the company had finally thrashed out a solution to the problem of clashing structures of executive pay, under which German top executives have typically earned far less than their American counterparts. A package of share options and bonuses will now gradually bring Germans up to American levels. The company also continues to sound upbeat about the savings to be made, particularly in distribution. But it is striking how much emphasis it puts on a new drive for sales in its catalogue of the benefits of the merger. With Asian markets still depressed, the company made clear this week that it sees Europe as the best chance of giving the joint company a rapid boost in sales.

Whether those hopes are realised will play a large part in determining the shape of fu-

ture mergers. There is, after all, a rich history of the mutual frustration of European and American car manufacturers penetrating each others' markets, despite decades of trying. Past successes are easily surrendered, as GM has found. Chrysler itself knows the problems well. One of the most telling comments this week in Detroit was the declaration by a senior Chrysler executive that "we've got less than 1 per cent of the market in Europe after 11 years of trying". Gary Valade, a member of the combined management board on the Chrysler side, said: "We know we can do better".

Chrysler's past difficulty in breaking into Europe is a textbook study in the pitfalls of transatlantic marketing. Its large, medium-priced cars, produced for the highly competitive American market, have suited neither the European taste for large, luxury cars, nor for small, cheap ones. Its 300M sedan, in partic-

ular, has proved too large for the European market.

It has also been hampered by concerns about quality and service, and by a paucity of dealerships. DaimlerChrysler now says it plans to use the Chrysler brand, possibly a new model based on the economy Neon car, to push its way into the European mass market. That seems far better judged than Chrysler's previous attempts, yet will require further heavy investment. It is a good reminder that even if the predicted mega-mergers take place, they may not lead to the rapid cost-cutting and easing of overcapacity that the industry's hordes of management consultants would like to see.

That is particularly true given the sensitivity of Europe's new centre-left governments to the threat of rising unemployment as the continent's growth slows. The political importance of car manufacturers remains huge; mergers predicated on huge job cuts may prove hard to agree. It is perhaps inevit-

able that a thick strand of Detroit speculation would spin out from this week's general euro-excitement in the US.

Mr Clinton, who has long backed the project of European economic integration, suggested that monetary union would boost European growth. American corporate executives have been queuing to pronounce on the new ease of doing business in Europe, and forecasting a wave of mergers and an intensification of competition. But the pitfalls are clear enough to make that optimism questionable. This week's Detroit chatter is bound to prove partly right, eventually.

More mergers will take place, until the industry's grotesque overcapacity shrinks. But as DaimlerChrysler shows, the profits from those deals will not flow automatically. Nor, even if they follow the transatlantic model of DaimlerChrysler, do they buy themselves a cheap bridge across the notorious ocean of differences between Europe and the US.

System on trial in search for City justice

The final resolution of the dispute between Keith Percy, chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management at the time of the Peter Young affair, and his regulator, Imro, underlines how difficult it can be for City executives to challenge a disciplinary sanction.

After more than two years of wrangling, and hundreds of thousands of pounds in costs, Mr Percy has agreed to accept a reprimand from Imro, primarily so that he can return to fund management in his full capacity as a registered individual.

Few executives even get to the stage of considering a tribunal hearing, according to legal experts. This is principally because most disputes are settled before any penalty is made public, although the regulators deny there is any plea-bargaining.

Individuals who do not accept the proposed sanctions can go to a tribunal, and if they lose can appeal. Many, however, find that the odds are heavily loaded against them and some have gone so far as to complain that the appeals system is contrary to the laws of natural justice.

Lindsay Hill, a partner with Fox Williams, the City legal firm, helped to mount a successful challenge to a Securities and Futures Authority ruling against Ron Baker, the Barings director and immediate boss of Nick Leeson, the rogue trader. Mr Hill says the deterrents against the tribunal route are manifold.

First, there is the expense. MGAM agreed to meet the initial costs of the five directors, including Keith Percy, who resigned amid the Young scandal, but not to finance a challenge at tribunal level. It is estimated that it would have cost Mr Percy at least a further £1 million to take his case before the tribunal. There is no legal aid available for such cases.

Then there are legal costs to be taken into account. Unlike in civil court cases, if the complainant wins, the costs are not paid by the regulator — unless "unreasonableness" on the part of the watchdog can be proven. Should the claimant lose, however, he must pay a percentage of the regulators' costs.

Thirdly, individuals must work with a paucity of information. Mr Hill says it is often difficult to obtain sufficient in-

formation from a regulator to mount an adequate defence. Although there are rules of disclosure, they are not as broad in a civil case.

Fourthly, the complainant can expect a lack of support from witnesses. Individuals are frequently unwilling to give evidence in favour of the complainant because they fear upsetting the regulator. Most witnesses will, of course, be regulated by the same body.

On top of this, it is often difficult to co-ordinate a defence. A legal firm may act on behalf of the company under investigation, but not the individuals involved — or vice versa. The regulators can thus drive a wedge between the two parties, often at the expense of the individuals, says Mr Hill.

Lastly, the tribunal is a long, drawn-out process. While companies are usually permitted to continue trading during the course of the investigation, the authorisation of key individuals is usually suspended, barring them from working in the industry and effectively preventing them from earning.

Individual executives have taken on the forces of regulation and won. Mr Baker succeeded in having four out of five SFA charges overturned after a tribunal hearing, while one of his colleagues accepted a ban. In the end, it was the Department of Trade and Industry that did for Mr Baker, disqualifying him as a director in December.

Some of the complaints have not fallen on deaf ears. The Financial Services Authority, the statutory watchdog replacing the current patchwork of regulators, is consulting the industry about the application of its proposed enforcement powers, dubbed by some as draconian. Chief among the proposals is the creation of an independent tribunal under the control of the Lord Chancellor's Department. There is also behind-the-scenes debate as to whether individuals should be entitled to legal aid.

For Howard Davies, chairman of the FSA, it will be a tricky trial to find the correct balance between effective regulation and natural justice.

RICHARD MILES

Hamster jam

IF YOU have tears still to shed, shed them for the 19 hamsters on Death Row at the Corporation of London. Today an Italian national will appear before Highbury Corner Magistrates Court to face charges under the importation of animals legislation and of animal cruelty after he was apprehended in Camden.

The charges were brought by the Corporation's animal welfare officers after a van was discovered carrying 23 of the beasts, plus a guinea pig. For some bizarre historical reason the City Corporation owns the Ani-

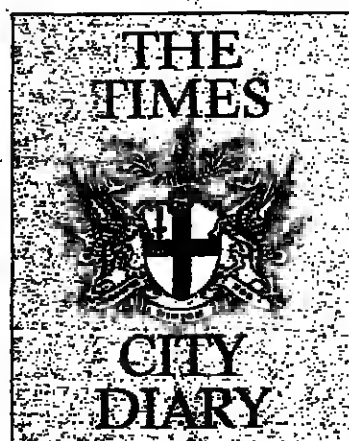
mal Reception Centre at Heathrow, which is where the animals, minus four hamsters that had to be destroyed, are now housed.

Next the tricky bit. They have to be kept in quarantine for six months to prevent the importation of rabies — a rabid hamster? Doesn't bear thinking about — at a cost of £1,000 apiece. This is a lot for a hamster, especially as they only live for two years so, statistically, a quarter will not make it. So the beasts face an appointment with their Maker within 15 days — unless Mario Avagliano, 28, pleads not guilty, in which case they must be kept for the duration of the trial.

The reception centre is not suitable for any extended period. Free kennels are needed for the Heathrow 19, plus guinea pig, or, I suppose, a corporate sponsor for their quarantine. Otherwise it's the chop.

A bright side to this grim tale: there is I am told, "considerable media interest" building among the local papers and at least one TV company. I will keep you posted.

A COLLEAGUE was charmed to receive a card yesterday addressed, from the writing, by a highly literate eight-year-old. The first class stamp suggested that the offspring of a friend had been anxious to speed the arrival of this year's thank-you letter. Inside was an "exclusive invitation" for a birthday party, at a none-too-ex-



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CITY DIARY

clusive APR of 15.9 per cent. The higgledy-piggledy writing, on closer examination, was computer-generated, designed to ensure the junk mail did not go into the bin unread.

Euro-torpor

AN OUTBREAK of euro-indifference on the Continent. This would be understandable after the past week's blanket coverage, except that it was last year, when they should have been fascinated by the approach of the single currency.

Consultancy Prowse & Co has looked at the accounts of the 100 top companies in Europe, including the British, and found that barely half made any reference to their euro in their message to shareholders. To companies such as BMW, Siemens and Alcatel Alsthom, as was, the event does not even rate a mention. Obvious-

On message

I WROTE yesterday of Chris Gent, Vodafone chief executive, and his cricket-watching holiday in Australia, just as the company was trying to take over AirTouch. The company's smug justification for this absence was that he could easily keep in touch because the mobile phone network worked perfectly there.

An e-mailer contacts me from Australia to point out that this is hardly surprising. The network is run by Optus, part owned by Cable & Wireless — one of Vodafone's main rivals.

ON MARCH 11 and 12 the Treasury's Forum will meet outside Paris to hear keynote addresses from Ken Clarke and Jean-Claude Trichet, governor of the Bank of France, and lots and lots about the euro. Implementation of the euro, corporate risk management, "multi-currency and cross-border pooling" and something called VaR (sic) in the corporate environment.

It does sound fun! Entirely appropriate, says my source, that they are all meeting at Disneyland.

Goofy

WHILE we are on the subject, I have a copy of Michael Eisner's annual letter to shareholders of The Walt Disney Company, of which he is chairman and chief executive.

In California, or alternatively, I suppose, in Disneyland they produce

a different sort of chairman's statement. He begins: "I am looking out the window and can see the seasons change (yes, the seasons do change in Los Angeles — the eucalyptus leaves drop more and the sprinklers go on less often)..."

There follow a further 12 home-spun, folksy paragraphs. He recalls the time when "we held a senior management retreat at my parents' apple orchard in Vermont. Although we were a week late for 'wow appreciation day' in Woodstock, we were not too late to cruise Sam's Army and Navy Store (recently renamed Sam's Outfitters for political correctness)."

I think he means they had a good year.

MARTIN WALLER



Michael Eisner was sorry to miss cow appreciation day in Vermont

Visible success could not have been achieved by an invisible minister

From Lord Simon of Highbury, the Minister for Trade & Competitiveness in Europe. Sir, Your Commentary "Crisis, what crisis at the Treasury" (January 6) claimed that I have been "almost invisible" in my Ministerial role.

Invisible to whom? Not to the 1,000 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to whom I spoke at breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings throughout the country before the bilateral exchange rates were announced on May 2, as they debated with supply chains and colleagues how best to compete in the coming crucial years. Not to the 1.6 million people running SMEs to whom I wrote in September about the need to prepare for the launch of my "beloved" euro, whether we join EMU or not. Not to the chairmen of the 12 regional fora to whom I spoke on how British business needs to take advantage of the new opportunities that the more transparent single market place will offer. Not to the attendees of around 200 other public engagements I have fulfilled since I joined the Government.

When I was in business, I was judged by my results. I expect no different in Government. As a result of the efforts of the Euro Preparations Unit (EPU), and the value that I trust is added by my visibility, we have carried out one of the most successful Government to business information campaigns ever, resulting in over 540,000 requests from SMEs and trade associations for our factsheets, over 300,000 accesses to our website, with an average ten "hits" per access, and over 100 articles written for trade/sectoral press. Our second benchmarking survey of SMEs shows that 70 per cent of SMEs were aware of our campaign and the number of those who had made preparations had increased by 150 per cent.

The implications of the historic change EMU represents may not be easy to understand, but the Government has a duty, and I have a job, to ensure that UK business is realistic and competitive in its approach to the growing European commercial opportunities. We have not achieved the above results by being invisible.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SIMON,
Treasury Chambers,
Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG.

Body Shop appoints Murray

Body Shop, the cosmetics group, has given its management team another shake-up with the appointment of a new finance director, Alastair Murray, who joins the company from PIC International where he was finance director of its food ingredients arm for four years.

The move follows the appointment last year of Frenchman Patrick Gourlay as chief executive, replacing co-founder Anita Roddick, who became co-chairman alongside Gordon, her husband.

Jeremy Kett, the group's current finance director, will become head of corporate finance and remain on the main board until May, when the company announces its final results.

BWI to go private
Managers of BWI, the supplier of processing and packaging equipment for consumer industries, are hoping to take the company private. The company said yesterday it had received a number of approaches, including one from an MBO team. The announcement lifted BWI shares 22½p to 69p, valuing the company at about £32 million. Only last year BWI completed the \$69 million (£42 million) purchase of RJ Jones, a US competitor. The company's main shareholders include PDM, which has 17 per cent of the shares.

Avonside bid
Avonside Group, which provides services to the building industry, admitted yesterday it had received an approach that may lead to a takeover. The company's shares climbed 7½p to 47½p, which capitalises the company at about £19 million. Interim results for the current year showed a rise in pre-tax profits to £1.7 million from £1 million.

Avonmore boost
Avonmore Waterford, the food manufacturer based in the Republic of Ireland, is investing £40.82 million (£28.8 million) in operations in America and Britain. In the UK the company is expanding its Cuisine Foodservice business at Tamworth, Staffordshire, to include fresh meats.

Government threat sees creation of semiconductor giant

Hyundai and LG in chip deal

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

TWO giants of the South Korean electronics sector have agreed to merge their semiconductor businesses after threats from the Government forced LG to drop its opposition to a virtual takeover of its operation by Hyundai.

LG Group said yesterday that it would merge its chip unit with its opposite number at Hyundai and said that it would not be taking a stake in the new company.

The combined group will be one of top three producers of

memory chips globally, alongside Japan's NEC and Samsung also of South Korea. However, it could encounter opposition from competition authorities as the merger will reinforce South Korea's control over some 40 per cent of the market in DRAM chips.

Siemens, which last summer announced the closure of its Tyneside plant with the loss of 1,100 jobs, has blamed South Korea for the precipitous fall in chip prices.

The merger of LG Semicon with Hyundai Electronic Industries is likely to force a decision on the future of large investments in Scotland and

Wales. Both companies have invested heavily in new memory chip plants in Britain, though Hyundai's plant in Dunfermline has been mothballed and completion of the LG Semicon facility in Wales has been in doubt because of the catastrophic plunge in the price of semiconductors.

The South Korean Government has been pushing its debt-strapped conglomerates to consolidate their interests in a market suffering huge overcapacity and an initial 70/30 split was agreed in September but the two companies fell out over the issue of control.

Arthur D. Little, the management consultancy, was appointed to advise on the structure of the group and recommended that Hyundai take the lead. LG initially refused to co-operate and threatened to sue the consultants.

However, the South Korean Government stepped up the pressure on the debt-strapped LG by threatening to use its influence over South Korea's banks to call in loans. The electronics group owes over \$6 billion (£3.6 billion), mainly to domestic banks.

The merged group will be saddled with about \$9.5 billion in debt but Hyundai said yesterday it would be seeking

some \$1.5 billion in foreign investment in order to take the lead in the chip market. The company claimed that the new group could produce 280,000 wafers a month, ahead of Samsung which controls 18 per cent of the market.

Britain has suffered a spate of closures and threats to foreign-owned chip plants. In addition to the troubles at the UK plants of LG, Hyundai and Siemens, Fujitsu has shut down a plant in Durham. A wafer fabrication plant in Wales owned by QPL International of Hong Kong also recently fell victim to the slump, claiming 500 jobs.

Systems set to recognise pecking order

THERE has always been something rather egalitarian about computers in the workplace. If a corporate network breaks down — or, more commonly, slows down — everyone suffers equally.

Not any more. A deal to be announced today between Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Compaq will allow IT directors to decide which employees deserve to have the fastest access to a corporate network.

Obviously, this is bad news for anyone at the bottom of the food chain in any large organisation, but it could help companies to use their IT systems in a far more efficient way.

Phil Smith, Cisco's business development director, is typically euphemistic.

"What you actually do is give a base level of service to everyone," he says. "And then on top of that give a premium service to those who need it most."

There are many practical examples of why such technology can be useful. Any company's accounts department would benefit enormously from extra network capacity — or bandwidth, as IT people call it — at the end of the financial year. This would allow their computers to work faster to complete accounts on time, and reduce the risk of a network crash.

It may be annoying for those in another department — say personnel — to suffer at the expense of accounts. However, the situation could be reversed at different times of the year, for example, during early autumn when lots of graduates are being recruited.

The consortium of companies behind the technology calls it a "policy-based system". It is also known as a "directory-enabled system" because it learns the identities — and therefore importance — of all a company's employees. In an international organisation, an employee could log on to a terminal in any country and always be

given the same amount of bandwidth.

Another advantage to the system is that it allows employees to book extra bandwidth in advance. This could be useful for video conferences, which require enormous amounts of network capacity.

Companies that conduct a lot of business online — such as City brokers — could also find the system useful. They can simply allocate more bandwidth to their most lucrative clients, thus making sure that all their deals are prioritised and go through their computer systems first.

As Mr Smith says: "Networks will become more discerning — channelling power where it is required, but with sufficient deftness to apply privileges to individuals. That translates into a greater return on investment from the network."

As with most modern IT systems, it is also brutally easy to erase people from the system if they are sacked. "Access privileges can be easily terminated with a 'click' of a mouse," Mr Smith says.

THE Ritz-Carlton is considering hiring "technology butlers" for its US and European hotels after the success of a trial at its Kuala Lumpur property. The butlers were hired to cope with the high-tech demands of travelling executives, and can help to solve problems ranging from jammed fax machines to malfunctioning laptops.

JOHN HAINE, a founder director of Ionica, the wireless telephone company that went into administration last year, has joined TTP Communications, a Cambridge supplier of technology for mobile phones. He will run the division of TTP responsible for UMTS, the next-generation standard of mobile communications that will allow mobile phones to access the Internet at high speeds.

CHRIS AYRES

Eisner's Disney pay is almost halved

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN LOS ANGELES

WALT DISNEY, hit by an overall slowdown last year and a dismal fourth quarter, cut the salary and bonus of Michael Eisner, his chief executive, by almost half, to \$5.8 million (£3.5 million), last year.

Mr Eisner last year received a base salary of \$764,423 and a bonus of \$5 million. In 1997 he was paid a salary of \$750,000 and a bonus of \$9.9 million.

Forbes Magazine last September estimated that Mr Eisner was worth \$710 million, based on stock options, bonuses and other perks. Disney and Mr Eisner have come under criticism for his lucrative pay package.

Disney's 1998 financial year, which ended last September, was weak compared with previous years, with net profits rising just 4 per cent to \$1.9 billion, on a 6 per cent gain in revenues. The entertainment group was hurt by the Asian meltdown, and its film studios suffered from box office losses and weak video sales. Also, its ABC television network had low ratings.

In November, Disney reported a 28 per cent drop in fourth-quarter net income as poorly performing films, disappointing video sales and other problems held back earnings.

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Thierry Desmarest, right, with François Cornelis, of Petrofina, when the takeover was announced

Total lifts earnings forecast

BY CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THIERRY DESMAREST, chairman of Total, has increased his forecast of the earnings boost from the oil group's takeover of Petrofina, its Belgian rival.

M Desmarest, who has been on a charm offensive designed to woo sceptical financial analysts and investors over the Petrofina deal, said that earnings would rise up to 15 per cent as a result of the

takeover, up five points from his previous forecasts.

He also revealed that Total's 1998 net profit would be just 10 per cent below the previous year's total of £1.6 billion (£830 million), in spite of a 30 per cent slide in the oil price. M Desmarest said that the result was a markedly better performance than expected from Anglo-Saxon oil groups.

The merged Total Fina will have production capacity of 1.5 million barrels per day by 2005 compared with Total's current production of 800,000 barrels per day.

M Desmarest forecast that the merged group's return on assets would be one percentage point higher by 2003, ranging from 13 to 17 per cent on oil price expectations of \$13 to \$15 per barrel.

Self-assessment's human cost

BY FRANK HASKIEW AND FRANCESCA LAGERBERG

TAXPAYERS who have yet to submit their 1998 income tax return are now under pressure to file it before the January 31 deadline, or face the automatic £100 penalty. The latest figures show that four million tax returns (nearly half the expected number for the year) have still to be filed. Many of these returns will probably make it to the Inland Revenue on time, particularly those in the hands of professional advisers. However, for the unrepresented, self-assessment is still a daunting prospect.

Self-assessment is now reaching the conclusion of its second full year of operation. The Revenue has just announced the results of a public consultation on the self-assessment system. It poked away the full findings of this consultation on its Internet home page but the results show that aside from the expected teething problems, there is still much room for improvement. One particular aspect highlighted by respondents to the consultation was the complexity of the forms that taxpayers had to complete. The worry and confusion caused to taxpayers appears to date to be completely disproportionate to the tax being collected. While the introduction of self-assessment cost £800 million, according to the Revenue, what has been the human cost?

Consider just two random examples of ordinary people who



Form-filling has been a great stress for some, say Francesca Lagerberg and Frank Haskiew

are struggling with self-assessment. Just prior to the last self-assessment deadline a little old lady was spotted at the front of a post office queue asking to send a document by recorded delivery. She had her tax return, and was desperate to ensure that it reached the Revenue before the deadline. She was in deep conversation with the cashier, and it became clear she was a troubled lady. She had in the recent past sold her house and its contents and moved into sheltered accommodation. She did not understand the tax relating to the sale of her house, she could not find the relevant documentation and was very distressed about completing her tax return form.

The second example is of a highly numerate, retired engineer. Like most retired people on

a pension with a few investments, his financial affairs were modest, but completing his tax return proved to be an uphill struggle. His comments are worthy of recording, in full. "I haven't a clue what I am doing. I am just putting figures into boxes parrot fashion, with no idea of what I am trying to achieve, and whether it is correct."

These two people were ordinary law-abiding senior citizens, the sort of people who would never knowingly submit an incorrect tax return. Both of them were under great stress, and it was clear that they felt let down by the tax system.

Are these two isolated experiences? Sadly it would appear not. So what has gone wrong? Self-assessment was sold to taxpayers as a clearer tax system,

which would sweep away many of the complexities found in the old system, producing benefits for taxpayers, or "customers" as they are now known. Taxpayers have a right to feel short-changed, because for many it has clearly failed in that aim. The main benefits appear to accrue to the Revenue, which has passed on much of its work to the taxpayer. This may have produced great cost savings for the Revenue, but left many taxpayers confused and bemused.

Whose fault is it? It would be easy to blame the Revenue. While this may be true up to a point, it is not the whole story. Self-assessment might have been a clearer system if concerted action had been taken to simplify the tax system, for example, by abolishing the schedular sys-

tem and simplifying reliefs. Instead, recent Chancellors have undertaken a course exactly opposite to this: over the past ten years, the volume of tax rules has doubled, and much of this has occurred in the past five years. Many of these unwelcome complications started when Norman Lamont attempted to disguise numerous tax increases. This trend has been continued in a most able fashion by the latest Chancellor. All indications are that it will get even worse.

The tax calculations are now so complicated that many tax professionals struggle to understand them. If they are struggling, what hope is there for the ordinary taxpayer? We suspect very little. For many ordinary taxpayers, self-assessment has resulted in a massive shift in the burden from the State to the individual. For many, that burden is too great to bear lightly. Unfortunately, unless our overloaded tax system is subject to fundamental reform designed to make it easier to understand and to calculate tax liabilities, things are unlikely to improve, and could well get much worse. Tinkering with the words is not good enough. A few years ago, a colleague described self-assessment as "a ticking time bomb which will blow up in the face of the next Government". He has a nasty habit of being proved right.

Frank Haskiew and Francesca Lagerberg are tax managers with the Tax Faculty of the ICAEW.

Financial reporting needs Aussie touch

AUSTRALIANS like to make their points of view plain. Take the cricket, for example. On the opening day of the Melbourne Test, which was before a great English victory and before the Gough hat-trick had restored some dignity, it rained all day. One Melbourne paper ran a front page consisting of a huge photograph of a glum Australian batsman surveying the scene from the dressing room window. The headline read: "No Runs. No Wickets. No Play. Damn. Not A Bad Day For The English."

This is not simple pom-bashing — the press was astonishingly generous when, three days later, the English had won the match. But it is the principle that the views that you hold should be strong and that people should be in no doubt what they are.

One exponent of this is Ken Spencer. He is chairman of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). But perhaps more importantly he is current chairman of the ecumenically titled G4+1. This group consists of representatives of the standard-setting bodies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and America. Spencer pursues his task with good Australian zeal. When the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) was in the process of agreeing just before Christmas the only voice of protest was that of Spencer and the AASB. What he was protesting about was that the IASC needed to have this last loose end tied up before putting its package before IOSCO, the stock exchanges' organisation, in the hope that it will rubber stamp the IASC rules as a route towards acceptance on the world's, and more importantly, America's, stock exchanges.

The rules were a compromise and the Australians said so. "As soon as you move away from full fair value," said Spencer, "it's a compromise and you have to write long rules to make the compromise work. We could have lived with the compromise if the rules were rigorous." But people were saying: "We don't know what this section means — we just need to get it done." So the Australians became the only member of the IASC to vote against. The UK, France and America abstained. Everyone else voted the compromise through. It can only lead to more problems ahead.

The Australians' uncompromising stance extends to other areas. And this is where the G4+1 importance comes in. There is a vacuum

at the heart of global financial reporting rules at the moment. The IASC is making a rather unconvincing bid for leadership. Continental Europeans are suspicious, quite rightly, of America's perceived dominance via its Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). There is a great need for a body that seems to represent a wider community and one that is not exclusively powered by politics. The G4+1 currently fits that bill.

It has grown quite remarkably in influence and scope of work. And now it has released its first position paper. This deals with one of the most contentious areas around. What is known in the UK as merger accounting and around the rest of the world as pooling is monstrously flawed. As we all know, there is no such thing as a merger. There are only takeovers, regardless of the nice words said at the time. But if you claim something is a merger, and no large corporate organisation would do otherwise, then you use the pooling rules which mean that you add everything together, make no adjustments, and make few difficult charges to the reported figures.

What the G4+1 paper makes clear is that this should be booting into touch. In future, companies that "merge" should restate assets and liabilities at current values in their financial reporting. Which is what happens in Australia, where pooling is simply not permitted.

It would be good to think that the rest of the business world would follow the G4+1 lead. But in Spencer's view, the problem is deep. "We are conceptual rather than pragmatic in our approach," he said, wearing his Australian hat. "The UK is simply pragmatic. America is conceptual in approach and then is beaten over the head by a very powerful business lobby until it turns pragmatic."

The result is that flawed financial reporting rules around the world make life much more difficult than it should be. The blunt Australian approach to life, and cricket, should perhaps be applied to financial reporting. "We are isolated geographically," said Spencer, "so we feel the need to be keener to participate." And there is another effect of this. "There is no point in us flying 24 hours and then sitting quietly at the meeting."

It would be good to see this attitude fade away when applied to cricket. But the financial reporting world could do with more of this blunt approach.



ROBERT BRUCE

May's day of cricket glory

TIM MAY, the one-time Australian spin bowler, was probably the most noted accountant in the country to take to the game. These days he is chief executive officer of the Australian Cricketers' Association and he has just written his first book, which purports to be a "truest" account of the team on tour. In it he describes his beginnings. "I was an accountant," he said. "Accountancy is not fun. My discipline was auditing. Auditing is less fun." Then one day at an account-

ing conference he got the call. Over the Tannoy came the message: "Would Tim May please go to the foyer: your parents are on the phone. They wish to congratulate you on being picked in the Australian Cricket Team." As May triumphantly recounts: "I was now Tim May, Australian cricketer. I was no longer Tim May, Auditor. This was a significant change."

Same old story
BRITISH accountants would

smile at what is happening in Australia. Last year the elitist Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia announced that a merger with the larger Australian Society of CPAs should go ahead. Familiar arguments about speaking with one voice were heard. The institute produced market research showing that gaining the two-thirds majority would be a doddle. So what happened? Only half those who had said they would vote did so. And they threw the idea

resoundingly out. Now come the recriminations. One investor argued that accounts depend on sampling techniques so what confidence can the investing public have in published accounts if the institute gets the sampling of its members' opinion so wrong? A past president of the society said very simply of the institute: "These guys are never going to agree. They may not be in existence in 50 years but let them suffer." Accountants seem to behave the same the world over.

In the Nec

THE Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia prides itself on its traditions, and it needs to after the failure of its merger attempt. Perhaps the problems are those traditions. Its coat of arms suggests drinking. Do Fearsome peregrine falcons hold up the arms. Nec Turns Nec Favens the words proclaim — "Without Fear, Without Favour". It is a shame that accountants do not emblazon that mission statement more prominently around the world.

ROBERT BRUCE

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

No. 2591				No. 2592			
1999	Low	Company	Price	1999	Low	Company	Price
5.7	25	25	25	10	10	10	10
10.0	10	10	10	15	15	15	15
10.0	10	10	10	20	20	20	20
10.0	10	10	10	25	25	25	25
10.0	10	10	10	30	30	30	30
10.0	10	10	10	35	35	35	35
10.0	10	10	10	40	40	40	40
10.0	10	10	10	45	45	45	45
10.0	10	10	10	50	50	50	50
10.0	10	10	10	55	55	55	55
10.0	10	10	10	60	60	60	60
10.0	10	10	10	65	65	65	65
10.0	10	10	10	70	70	70	70
10.0	10	10	10	75	75	75	75
10.0	10	10	10	80	80	80	80
10.0	10	10	10	85	85	85	85
10.0	10	10	10	90	90	90	90
10.0	10	10	10	95	95	95	95
10.0	10	10	10	100	100	100	100
10.0	10	10	10	105	105	105	105
10.0	10	10	10	110	110	110	110
10.0	10	10	10	115	115	115	115
10.0	10	10	10	120	120	120	120
10.0	10	10	10	125	125	125	125
10.0	10	10	10	130	130	130	130
10.0	10	10	10	135	135	135	135
10.0	10	10	10	140	140	140	140
10.0	10	10	10	145	145	145	145
10.0	10	10	10	150	150	150	150
10.0	10	10	10	155	155	155	155
10.0	10	10	10	160	160	160	160
10.0	10	10	10	165	165	165	165
10.0	10	10	10	170	170	170	170
10.0	10	10	10	175	175	175	175
10.0	10	10	10	180	180	180	180
10.0	10	10	10	185	185	185	185
10.0	10	10	10	190	190	190	190
10.0	10	10	10	195	195	195	195
10.0	10	10	10	200	200	200	200
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10.0	10	10	10	250	250	250	250
10.0	10	10	10	255	255	255	255
10.0	10	10	10	260	260	260	260
10.0	10	10	10	265	265	265	265
10.0	10	10	10	270	270	270	270
10.0	10	10	10	275	275	275	275
10.0	10	10	10	280	280	280	280
10.0	10	10	10	285	285	285	285
10.0	10	10	10	290	290	290	290
10.0	10	10	10	295	295	295	295
10.0	10	10	10	30			

LEISURE & HOTELS							
29	11	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
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50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
50	12	APL Leisure	88	9	23	12	12
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THE TIMES THURSDAY JANUARY 7 1999

Council failed

Court of Appeal

Law Report January 7 1999

Court of Appeal

Council failed to maintain road ice-free

User's motives relevant to whether objective test satisfied

Goodes v East Sussex County Council

Before Lord Justice Mummery, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Hutton

[Judgment December 21]

A highway authority, by failing to act expeditiously to prevent ice from forming on the surface of a road, was in breach of its statutory duty to maintain it.

The Court of Appeal held by a majority (Lord Justice Mummery, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Hutton) that the highway authority was in breach of its statutory duty to maintain it.

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repair and maintenance of the road, alleging that they were responsible by reason of their failure to maintain the road by keeping it free from ice.

The central issue before the judge was whether the council was in breach of its statutory duty to maintain the road.

That duty was imposed by section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 which provided:

"(1) The authority, who are for the time being the highway authority for a highway maintainable at the public expense are under a duty to maintain the highway."

Section 299 of the 1980 Act provided:

"Maintenance includes repair and 'maintainable' are to be construed accordingly."

Section 38(1) of the Act provided that in an action for damages arising out of the authority's failure to maintain:

"... it is a defence ... to prove that the authority had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonable to secure that the part of the highway to which the claim relates was not dangerous for traffic."

The defendants had pleaded a section 38 defence but it was abandoned in the course of the trial.

At 11.45pm on November 13 Mr Hemmings, the defendants' local highway superintendent for West-Down Division, received from the Southampton Weather Centre over the telephone a weather forecast

which contained a warning of frost. In response to that message Mr Hemmings, having discussed the matter with Mr Luff, the deputy divisional engineer, arranged for the roads to be pre-salted, starting at 5.30am.

Pre-salting was intended to prevent the formation of ice on the road surface rather than to dispense ice already there.

It was common ground that the lorry that covered the network of roads which included Westbrook Hill on Mr Hemmings' instruction would have reached the place where the accident occurred within 15 minutes after its occurrence.

The most recent authoritative review of the law relating to the liability of a highway authority under section 41 was to be found in *Cross v Kirkland Metropolitan Borough Council* [1998] 1 All ER 564.

The real thrust of the plaintiffs' case was that there had been a culpable failure to prevent the formation of ice when there was ample time and adequate means to do so.

His Lordship said that once Mr Hemmings and Mr Luff had decided that the forecast conditions were such as to necessitate pre-salting, there was an escape from the conclusion that logic and the proper performance of their duty to maintain the highway dictated that the gritting vehicles should be ordered out at a time that they would be able to complete their rounds by the time the frost was sufficient to give rise to a real risk of dangerous icy patches on the roads.

There was a likelihood of ice forming from about 6am and, since the object of the exercise was to prevent that happening, the decision at 11.50pm should have been to send out the vehicles not later than 4am.

For there to be a breach of the duty to maintain in cases where the cause of the foreseeable danger to traffic was presence on the road surface of a substance such as ice, sufficient time had to have elapsed to make it *prima facie* unreasonable for the authority to have failed to take remedial measures.

That formula, which derived from the judgment of Lord Justice Goff in *Haydon v Kent County Council* [1978] QB 343, 363, was framed in terms appropriate to a case where what was in issue was whether remedial measures should have been taken by the authority.

It required some adaptation where the criticism was of a failure to take preventive measures, as in the present case.

Here the relevant question should be: had the authority, once they became aware of what they accepted was a need to take preventive measures, acted with, *prima facie*, appropriate diligence in implementing those measures?

If they had, there would be no breach of duty. If they had not, they would be thrown back on their statutory defence.

In the present case where the decision was that what was called for was pre-salting as preventive action, and there was no impediment to its being started at a time which

would have achieved that objective, a breach of duty could be said to be established.

His Lordship would therefore allow the appeal and direct that judgment be entered for the plaintiff on the issue of liability.

However, his Lordship regarded the law, as it at present appeared to be in that area, to be less than satisfactory and ripe for review.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS, dissenting, said that in *Haydon*, according to Lord Justice Goff, the question for the court was did the conditions arise as a result of the authority's fault or had a sufficient time elapsed so as to make it unreasonable to fail to take remedial actions?

It followed that in the case of ice and snow the authority would not normally be in breach of duty provided they took remedial action such as clearing, gritting or salting, in a reasonable time.

LORD JUSTICE SHAW in that case came to the same conclusion for the same reasons.

The Court of Appeal in *Cross* sought to apply the law as enunciated in *Haydon*.

In his Lordship's view there was an unreasonable delay in removing the ice in the present case, and his Lordship would dismiss the appeal.

LORD JUSTICE MORRIS concurred with Lord Justice Hutton.

Solicitors: Townsends, Swindon; Wynne Baxter Godfree, Lewes.

So, in order to be recoverable, the loss or damage had to result from the "arrangement" or "transaction" each of which had to be identified: see section 32(2)(b).

No difficulty had been caused by the identification of the arrangement. But the arguments advanced by counsel had demonstrated that the identification of the transaction as the purchase was insufficiently precise. A distinction had to be made between Duckwari's acquisition of the property and the means by which it was acquired.

Mr Richards argued that the transaction entered into in pursuance of the arrangement was not simply the acquisition but included the means by which it was acquired, in particular the borrowing of £350,000 from the bank.

Thus, he claimed that the loss or damage resulting from the transaction included actual and notional compound interest paid or owing to the bank.

Mr Hoser said that the only transaction falling within section 322 was Duckwari's acquisition of the property pursuant to the contract. That and that alone, he contended, was the "substantial property transaction" involving a director within the marginal note to section 320 and the borrowing from the bank could thus not be part of a transaction entered into in pursuance of an arrangement for the purposes of section 322.

Mr Hoser's argument was to be preferred. The loss or damage recoverable under section 322(3)(b) was limited to that resulting from the breach, to other words from the acquisition itself.

Judgment should be entered for Duckwari for the acquisition costs of the property less the net proceeds of its sale in 1997 together with simple interest at base rate plus 1 per cent.

LORD JUSTICE PILL and Lord Justice THORPE agreed.

Solicitors: Clarks, Reading; Vizards.

Pro Sieben Media AG v Carlton UK Television Ltd and Another

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Robert Walker

[Judgment December 17]

The test of whether an extract from a copyright work had been used by another for the purposes of criticism or review so as to bring it within the defence provided in section 30(1) of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, was an objective one: but the user's subjective intentions or motives were relevant to whether the material was satisfied the test of fair dealing on which that defence also depended.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing an appeal by the defendants, Carlton UK Television Ltd and Twenty-Two Television Ltd, from the decision of Mr Justice Laddie (*The Times* September 24, 1997) that they had infringed the copyright of the plaintiffs, Pro Sieben Media AG.

The main infringement was in the inclusion of a 20-second extract from a programme, "TAFF", broadcast by Pro Sieben on German television on August 27, 1996, in a programme called "The Big Story: Selling Babies", made by Twenty-Two and broadcast by Carlton on UK television on August 29, 1996.

The TAFF programme featured an interview with Mandy Allwood who in March 1996, while undergoing a course of fertility treatment, had become pregnant by her boyfriend, Paul Hudson, and was found to be carrying eight live embryos. All eight subsequently died.

The pregnancy received wide publicity at the time, and on the advice of a public relations consultant, Mr Mandy Allwood, Ms Allwood entered into various contracts, including one giving Pro Sieben exclusive rights to broadcast an interview with her in Germany. The interview, conducted by Carl with German voice-over, included footage of Ms Allwood and Mr Hudson visiting a toy shop in Wimbledon to buy eight teddy bears.

"The Big Story" was Carlton's flagship current affairs programme. The edition titled "Selling Babies" was about cheque-book journalism and concerned "ordinary people who, when something extraordinary happens in their lives, now see it as a way of making huge sums of money".

But it seemed to his Lordship that in the composite phrases "for the purposes of criticism or review" or "for the purpose of reporting current events" the mental element on the part of the user was of little more importance than in such everyday composite expressions as "for the purpose of argument" or

was available to British viewers with the right kind of satellite dish and Mr Clifford had actually only received £30,000 from Pro-Sieben, but had told Twenty-Two he received £50,000.

The programme ended with an interview with Mr Clifford himself who, when asked if he had ever lied, said: "Frequently, of course. I'm a PR. We lie all the time."

The judge concluded that Carlton's use of the TAFF extract came within neither of the defences under section 30 of the 1988 Act, which provided:

"(1) Fair dealing with a work for the purposes of criticism or review, of that or another work or of a performance of a work, does not infringe any copyright in the work provided that it is accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgment."

"(2) Fair dealing with a work for the purpose of reporting current events does not infringe any copyright in the work provided that it is accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgment."

Mr Michael Silverleaf, QC and Mr Mark Vanhegan for Carlton; Mr Martin Howe, QC and Miss Charlotte May for Pro-Sieben.

LORD JUSTICE ROBERT WALKER said the judge must have had well in mind the proper balance which the 1988 Act sought to achieve between the interests of the creative author and the wider public interest of which a very important part was freedom of speech.

There had been little dispute about the general principles applicable to the issue of fair dealing: whether under section 30(1) or (2), it was a question of degree, or of fact and impression.

The degree to which the challenged use competed with exploitation of copyright by the copyright owner was a very important consideration, but not the only one. The extent of use was also relevant, but its relevance depended on the circumstances.

If the fair dealing was for the purposes of criticism, that criticism might be strongly expressed and unbalanced without forfeiting the fair dealing defence. An author's remedy for malicious and unjustified criticism lay in the law of defamation, not copyright.

There was no authority on whether the words "for the purpose of" in section 30(1) and (2) imposed an objective test, as Pro-Sieben contended, or a subjective one, as Carlton contended.

But it seemed to his Lordship that in the composite phrases "for the purposes of criticism or review" or "for the purpose of reporting current events" the mental element on the part of the user was of little more importance than in such everyday composite expressions as "for the purpose of argument" or

"for the purpose of comparison". The intentions or motives of the user of another's copyright material were highly relevant to the defence available under section 30(1) and (2), but mainly on the issue of fair dealing.

It was not necessary for the court to put itself in the shoes of the infringer of the copyright in order to decide whether the offending piece was published "for the purpose of criticism or review".

"Criticism and review" and "reporting current events" were words of wide and indefinite scope, which should be interpreted liberally. The judge had taken as his starting point that Carlton's programme was criticising various works representing the fruits of chequebook journalism, of which the TAFF report was only one. A number of UK newspapers were also mentioned and quoted.

The programme's strongest message was that chequebook journalism was deeply inimical to truth. It divided the media into the "haves", who had bought an exclusive story and thought it entitled them to present it as they saw fit, and the "have-nots", who resorted to spoiling to upset their rivals, regardless of hurt to individual feeling.

Truth was an early casualty in such battles, which could be very traumatic for the ordinary people involved, even if they made some money out of it.

The judge erred in principle in focusing too much on the actual purposes, intentions and motives of those involved in the Carlton programme's production, and too little on its likely impact on the audience.

In his Lordship's judgment, the programme as a whole was made for the purpose of criticism of works of chequebook journalism in general, and in particular the recent treatment by the media of Ms Allwood's multiple pregnancy.

The use of the extract was fair dealing within section 30(1) since the extract used was short and did not in any realistic sense unfairly compete with Pro-Sieben's exploitation of its exclusive right; and the inclusion of Pro-Sieben's logo in the television version constituted sufficient acknowledgement.

Regarding section 30(2), Ms Allwood's pregnancy, its progress and its eventual outcome were current events of real interest to the public, and the volume and intensity of media interest were sufficient to bring the media coverage itself within the ambit of current events. On that basis, too, the use of the extract was fair dealing. It followed that both defences under section 30(1) and (2) were made out.

LORD JUSTICE HENRY and LORD JUSTICE NOURSE agreed.

Solicitors: Henry Hepworth; Frere Cholmeley Bischoff.

Limit to extent of indemnity relief of company

In re Duckwari plc (No 2)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Thorpe

[Judgment November 10]

The extent of the indemnity relief to be granted to a company in respect of an arrangement entered into in contravention of section 322 of the Companies Act 1985 (substantial property transactions involving directors, etc.) was limited to the loss or damage resulting from the acquisition of property and did not include the borrowing costs incurred in acquiring it.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment in determining the amount to be granted to Duckwari plc following an earlier judgment (*The Times* May 18, 1998).

[1998] 3 WLR 913) declaring that an arrangement made between it and the respondents, Offshore Ltd and Mr Brian S. Cooper, concerning the purchase of a property at Corporation Street, High Wycombe, in 1989, resulted to a recoverable loss to Duckwari plc.

Mr David Richards, QC and Mr Kenneth Craig for Duckwari; Mr Philip Hoser for Offshore Ltd and Mr Cooper.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said in May the court had allowed Duckwari's appeal against the decision of Judge Paul Baker, QC and discharged his declaration that the arrangement between Duckwari and the respondents had resulted in no damage to Duckwari.

The effect of that decision was to hold that the respondents were, in broad terms, jointly and severally liable to make good to Duckwari the loss caused to it by the depreciation in value of the property.

In discussion with counsel after judgment it became clear that the extent of the relief to be granted to Duckwari remained a matter of acute controversy and that further argument would be necessary. Argument was heard on July 30, when judgment was reserved.

The respondents' relief was granted to Duckwari's appeal against the effect of section 322(3)(b) of the Companies Act 1985 which provided that the respondents were jointly and severally liable to indemnify Duckwari for "any loss or damage resulting from the arrangement or transaction".

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So, in order to be recoverable, the loss or damage had to result from the "arrangement" or "transaction" each of which had to be identified: see section 32(2)(b).

No difficulty had been caused by the identification of the arrangement. But the arguments advanced by counsel had demonstrated that the identification of the transaction as the purchase was insufficiently precise. A distinction had to be made between Duckwari's acquisition of the property and the means by which it was acquired.

Mr Richards argued that the transaction entered into



NEW VIDEOS

Big monster
hits the small
screen

PAGE 38

THE TIMES ARTS

GALLERIES



Change in the weather

The lady in front of me thought there was something wrong with the big black speakers beside the Barbican stage, which were creaking and groaning in electronic agony as she took her seat. But, no, it was Adrian Noble's way of preparing us all for a good powerful storm. First, a tiny boat was seen floundering in vast violet drapes. Then the action moved to the deck of a boat which seethed, palpitated, creaked, groaned and split to some splendidly ferocious thunder and lightning. Clearly we were in for a bold, imaginative staging of the finest of Shakespeare's late romances.



THEATRE

The Tempest
Barbican

you are sometimes more aware of the complex music rising from his throat than of what he is actually saying. He has also answered those who felt that otherworldliness was missing from his performance. The famous speech about the dissolution of those cloud-capped towers and solemn temples is as weirdly, dreamily prophetic as it should be.

But at Stratford he made you feel that Prospero's bitterness at old wrongs was stronger, more obsessive. You felt a dangerously moody, volatile man was fingering wounds that were still open, still raw. Until Scott Handy's unearthly Ariel declared that he would pity Prospero's foes "were I human", you actually felt that he might not forgive bad Antonio and worse Sebastian.

Calder has not ditched this unusual and rewarding reading, but he has made it less emphatic and obvious. He uses his magic staff to make his victims writhe with cramps, but there is now no serious chance he will turn them into toads or beetles. The result is, I suppose, a subtler performance: but the cost is some loss of dramatic tension as well as less impact when Prospero does bring himself to kiss his odious, usurping brother.

Nevertheless, Calder still commands the stage, still leaves you wondering why he is not the household name that many a less feeling, intelligent and technically resourceful actor has become. The supporting performers remain a bit uneven — a symptom of the difficulty the RSC is finding in attracting the consistently excellent performers it once did? —



Scott Handy (Ariel), David Calder (Prospero), Barry Stanton (Stephano), Adrian Schiller (Trinculo)

commands the stage, still leaves you wondering why he is not the household name that many a less feeling, intelligent and technically resourceful actor has become. The supporting performers remain a bit uneven — a symptom of the difficulty the RSC is finding in attracting the consistently excellent performers it once did? —

but in one area are actually better than before. The scene in which Ariel plays havoc with the play's lowlife is far more drunken and, with Adrian Schiller's Buster-Kelton-like Trinculo unable to sit down, the wailing blend of red-eyed hyne and mud-caked cur that is Robert Glenister's Caliban unable to get up, and Barry

Stanton's huge, pompous Stephano repeatedly mistaking sprinklings of booze for a divinely ordained rainstorm. It is particularly hilarious — but then all the clowning combines inventiveness and guile.

BENEDICT
NIGHTINGALE

For your eyes only?

Now that the Government has introduced an initiative to get all public libraries linked up to the Internet, one big moral and legal issue has arisen: should anyone who uses a library have access to anything that is published on the Internet? Will the Government end up paying for schoolchildren to search every site devoted to sex? Will men in dirty mags be subsidised to a abandon the back row of sleazebait cinemas in favour of screened-off terminals in their local libraries? Or should access be limited by web filters that censor material that could be harmful to minors?

A recent case in America has complicated the question. A library in Loudoun County, Virginia, had installed blocking software to protect children using the Internet. A coalition of civil liberties groups sought to have it removed, arguing that the library should not be reduced to "the electronic equivalent of the children's reading room". A federal judge agreed. Filtering was unconstitutional.

In Britain, the Bill of Human Rights became law on November 9, and one of its clauses states that "everyone has the right to freedom of expression". We are now legally bound by something that resembles the American Constitution. It may only be a question of time before libraries which are in the process of being connected to the Net and are still debating what filtering systems, if any, to apply, find their right to be selective about Internet access legally challenged, not least because of the existence of a Campaign for Internet Freedom which opposes all filtering software.

At present, under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, libraries are obliged to provide "a comprehensive and efficient service

Nicolette Jones
on the problems
libraries face in
screening smut
from the young

for people who live, work and study" in their catchment areas. Nobody has yet defined precisely what "comprehensive" means. Librarians make decisions about what books to select on the basis of inexact or idiosyncratic criteria which vary in different parts of the country, but the Library Association's Intellectual Freedom

in the past with, for instance, Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, Madonna's *Sex* and Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs. There are odd moments, too, of caution on the part of librarians: one recalls, for example, putting an alphabetical guide to London behind the counter, because under "g" it told readers how to sniff glue.

A similar kind of discretion may be applicable to the Internet, because some filtering software can be turned off when adults are using the terminals. This will be one of the options considered by the Library Association's working party; set up a few months ago to look into the question of filtering. Research has already shown, though, that the filters themselves are of variable use. If you filter by keywords, for instance, you can find "pussy" filtered out of nursery rhymes, and "button" out of government physics archives. Even with site blocking, or using a new system called PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection) of rating the offensiveness of websites, offensive material can get through.

"The only
foolproof
filter is to
sit next to
a child at a
terminal"

and Censorship Policy Statement (1998, revised since 1963) declares that librarians "shouldn't restrict access to books except as required by law", and is entirely on the side of freedom of access to information. Your local librarian may have used professional discretion in choosing the books that are bought, but will never refuse to get hold of a legally published book for you through the library's services network.

On occasion, though, libraries will put books "behind the counter", sticking books but not putting them on public display. This has happened in certain libraries

So letting your kids go to the library could be like sending them off to the pub, the casino or the strip joint. The only foolproof filter is to sit next to a child who is using a terminal. Parents have been warned.

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CHANGING TIMES

In all shapes and surprises

For most of my life the art of the circus has been on its last legs, and since those legs belonged to troupes of performing horses, elephants and tigers, their exit from the world of entertainment is an unromantic departure. For a while it looked as though clowning and acrobatics would follow them into the past, but the French-Canadian company Cirque du Soleil has changed that. Changed it utterly by elevating — *le mot juste* — the arts of springing through the air to new heights.

Their current show, first seen here last winter and now on its final tour, also brings a strongman act and two displays by contortionists whose bodies clearly do not have the sort of hinges the rest of us make do with. Elena Lev, an 18-year-old Russian dressed in shimmering grey-green, bends a leg round behind her back and over her head until the foot is touching the ground in front of her face, thus turning herself into a human 8.

An act such as hers induces astonishment that the human frame can do such wonders. Trapeze work, high, high in the upper space of this great hall, makes one marvel at the nerve, confidence and mutual trust of the artists setting off on a sequence of spinning somersaults that will climax in a diagonal dive through bars towards someone whose flying trapeze has just brought him to the one point in the air where it is possible to catch him. As if the feeling of vast space were not already overwhelming, the stage resembles the under-reach of the Eiffel Tower, with rope ladders and steel wires taking the place of the curving legs.

CIRCUS

Before the acts begin, some topheavy (and toppling) figures in sugar-icing mauves go trotting about the place and often reappear, doing nothing in particular. In general, the show takes longer than I expected in building up suspense and extending applause time, but this may be dictated by practical needs, to allow the performers to recuperate.

Xavier Lamoureux in his white wig and vaguely 18th-century costume knots and unknots himself on his trapeze like someone in a Boucher painting doing fancy stuff with a swing, like all the artists who are putting their bodies through such ordeals; he looks serene but surely his nerves are screaming. The serenity is one of the most striking features of this marvellous show, the suggestion of effortless achievement arrived at with a grace that smiles in the face of gravity.

Quint costumes take us immediately into the land of the exotic, and the lighting shifts us that much further, into ballroom. When Paul Bowler is whirled aloft like a wingless angel to tumble inside a skeleton cube, the lights turn the spinning bars of his cage into flashes of red, green and blue, lingering on the retina for seconds afterwards.

The three mournful clowns are delightful, the husky singing of French chansons



Clowning glory: Leonid Leikine in the stunning Cirque du Soleil spectacular

JEREMY KINGSTON

Snap, crackle, pop breakfast

RADIO

took a substantial slice of the audience with him to his new and present home. Virgin (the station he liked so much that he bought it, where he increased the breakfast figures from 1.8 million to 2.6 million inside three months).

Humphrys-MacGregor-Naughtie may be the names on every lip among the media chattering classes, but *Today* is a unique broadcasting institution which will always be bigger than its personalities, therefore it has no real role in the battles that go on elsewhere. In the big bad world where radio stations have to make money, things are very different.

Evans, Terry Wogan at Radio 1 breakfast show he

dio 2 and Chris Tarrant at London's Capital Radio are the leading lights of breakfast radio. Tarrant more or less names his price (currently £1 million a year-plus) at Capital, which nearly bought Virgin before Evans arrived on the scene as a way of giving itself, and Tarrant, a national outlet.

If Banks and Ferrari are hardly in the times-and-traffic business, what exactly are they up to and who are they up against? The prime opposition must be Radio 5 Live, which changed its morning line-up a few months ago and now has a breakfast show presented by Victoria Derbyshire and Julian Worricker.

PETER BARNARD

سكزا من رايك

Songs in the off-key of life

NEW MOVIES: James Christopher sees Michael Caine give the performance of his life and Jane Horrocks charm for England in the stunning *Little Voice*

If cinema is the stuff of dreams, then *Little Voice* is a cruel warning that dreams only come true for the chosen few. Based on Jim Cartwright's 1992 theatrical smash, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, Mark Herman's comedy exploits the grimy lives of Scarborough's down-at-heel, whose only hope of escape is the lottery or slowitz stardom.

[That Herman pulls this off with as much flair as his other notable Yorkshire success, *Brassed Off*, is largely due to Michael Caine's unsavoury but Say, a talent scout at the far end of a negligible career. It is a moment as telling as any political conversion. Say makes the first genuine discovery of his life while under the painting body of Brenda Blythe's spectacularly vulgar ghoulie, Mari. Grappling with her bulging thighs, Say suddenly hears Mari's chronically shy daughter, LV, sing one-perfect impersonations of Shirley Bassey, Judy Garland and Marilyn Monroe.

Amazed, Say raises his peached eyes to heaven and the big time. But however much he tries to put LV on the road to glory, by way of Mr. X's nightclub, crippling stage fright — the inheritance of LV's ghastly family life — weeds their chances.

Part fairytale, part musical comedy and teenage romance, *Little Voice* is a wonderfully glibly antidote to the 42nd Street fantasy of the chorus girl who takes over the lead role for one night and walks of a star. Here the dash for stardom is simply dashed. But there are hefty compensations, at least Jane Horrocks's ability to turn LV's gawky wait into a torch-song diva.

Caine, however, steals the film. Cruising the streets of Scarborough in a bright red Chevy, gold medalist and a truly horrific collection of Hawaiian shirts, Caine, the Joe Higney of Hollywood heavyweights, hasn't looked so perfectly in his element in years.

Whether promoting baggy-breasted strippers or over-eight male dance acts who bobble along to music, Say keeps you guessing as to how seriously he believes in the pretentious genre of his own talents. Having carved a career from dreary, deadpan variations on villains and cocky hangers-on, Caine at last gets to make a flamboyant joke out of his own film persona.

However, Herman's seductive resolution lies outside the story of the ugly duckling who will never become a swan. LV does at least discover true love

Little Voice
Odeon West End
15, 96 mins
Sheer mischief at the expense of a glittering cast

The Siege
Odeon Leicester Square
15, 116 mins
Chilling wake-up call from Arab terrorists in New York

Psycho
Plaza, 15, 104 mins
Homage to Hitchcock backfires badly

Pi
Screen on the Green
15, 85 mins
Genius goes mad in Manhattan

Angel Dust
ICA, 116 mins
Japanese psycho thriller with bizarre twists

To Have and Have Not
Curzon Soho
15, 100 mins
Lauren Bacall whistles, Bogey comes running

In the form of Ewan McGregor, whose rampant sex appeal is hidden under the unlikely guise of a British Telecom repairman who collects racing pigeons. Showing how handsomeness can be erased by an anorak, McGregor woos Horrocks in one of the least erotic love matches of our time. It is almost enough to turn anyone from fancying flesh to fancying pigeons.

No matter that thematic subtlety and character development are nowhere in sight. The corny romance is compensated for by the glee with which Herman shoots his film. Like a saucy postcard gone haywire, the camera playfully zooms in on Mari's tight spangly tops, pans over steamy-up, eyes rocking on the harbour, and lingers on phallic stacks of plugs that spark wildly whenever a kettle is put on. But the real joy is the malicious amount of eternalism Herman extracts at the expense of his characters. Then, and the finest performance of Caine's career.

The rest of this week's releases are awash with paranoia, none more chilling than Edward Zwick's *The Siege*. Here the FBI, the CIA and the American military trip over each other during an Arab bombing campaign that brings Manhattan to its knees. With the scars of the Gulf and the threat of ter-

rorist reprisals on everyone's agenda, Zwick fingers a nerve as raw as any in mainstream cinema.

Does one have to become a monster in order to fight a monster? Zwick's glossy answer is yes and no. Denzel Washington's squeaky-clean Hubbard, head of the FBI Terrorism Task Force, tracks the suicidal Arab cells with the cool, old-fashioned rigour of a Hollywood homicide detective. Annette Bening's murky CIA agent smiles sweetly at Hubbard, but deploys her fading glamour to sleep with the enemy for information. And Bruce Willis's physically intimidating general tramples over both of them, wielding statistics and instilling panic wherever his cold blue eyes alight.

While these three scrap over who's in charge, there is palpable fear on the streets. Buses explode and cinemas are blown to bits. Despite the vicarious thrill of so much famous carnage, this is a deeply unset-

ling film. Roger Deakins's lush cinematography unfolds like a military offensive: swooping vistas of the Saudi desert, chopper views of New York skyscrapers, and tanks rumbling over Brooklyn Bridge. These are expensive ingredients to which Zwick brings a nauseous and horrifying sense of reality.

Against this backdrop, Washington delivers an impressive performance. Emotionally deadpan, politically astute, he absorbs one crisis after another, cementing his screen credibility while all about him are losing theirs.

The idea of remaking Hitchcock's 1960 classic *Psycho* poses a fascinating question: can one of the truly great fear movies be remade? frame-by-frame? Having persuaded Universal of the integrity of his experiment, Gus Van Sant reshoots the film with all the imagination of a photocopy.

Why did he bother? The grungy 1990s sensibility which he tries to impose makes the script seem dated, quaint and farcical. Colour merely highlights the poverty of the exercise. What was a motiveless attack on a naughty but nice middle-class American woman now seems seedy and routine. Worse, Hitchcock's delicious ironies are treated as jokes or simply flattened.

The actors' model themselves on the original performers rather than the characters. Vince Vaughn's Norman Bates is a poor shadow of Anthony Perkins. Anne Heche's Marion is a downmarket model of Janet Leigh with neither the class or allure. Even the return of Bernard Herrmann's string orchestra giving it stick in the back seat of Marion's car as she is hounded to the Bates motel sounds surmised. By the time the knife plunges in, any lingering interest is well and truly butchered.

From one psycho to rather a

lot. In David Aronofsky's *Pi* (rendered in the film's advertising as the symbol π), sinister investors and a Jewish sect doorstep a mathematical genius on the verge of discovering a 216-digit number that can predict the stockmarket and crack the Talmud's code for the true name of God. The Jews clearly have the better case. Who needs Wall Street when you can talk to the Almighty?

Despite the crude, twitchy cuts of this low-budget (\$60,000) movie it communicates a real sense of excitement and adventure. Shooting in high-contrast black and white, Aronofsky plugs his film into the mathematician's nervous system. Unfortunately, being inside the head of Sean Gulien's haunted, fortysomething Max Cohen is not a nice place to be. Rattling around an apartment that looks like the guts of an old robot, Max is clearly on the point of insanity. His bizarre thoughts bubble

up as if spoken underwater and eventually we are drowned by the sheer, relentless weight of them. This is *Rumble Fish* for Mensa students, and possibly a masterpiece in paranoia.

Sogo Ishii's Japanese melodrama *Angel Dust* features a gorgeous detective with the ability to slip her mind into that of the murderer. She has the unenviable task of nailing her former mentor and lover as a serial killer who injects poison into his female victims. This is a compelling psychological jigsaw puzzle, immaculately formal, conspicuously stylish, and it sports two nerve-shredding central performances by Kaho Minami as the detective and Takeshi Wakamatsu as the psychiatrist specialising in brainwashed patients.

There is a teasing tempo to this mental chess that is complemented by Ishii's surprisingly wry take on executive To-

kyo. There are beautifully framed close-ups of silent commuters on over-crowded trains, icy executive disagreements in plush tower blocks, and the clinical business of the murders themselves. But you have to suspend something larger than disbelief to absorb Ishii's arsenal of bizarre twists and coincidences.

The reprint of Howard Hawks's 1944 classic *To Have and Have Not* looks as reassuringly scratchy as ever. Here Humphrey Bogart's baggy-looking sliver of a tourist fishing bear bulldozes his way over various paranoid Vichy apparitions in Martinique, into the heart of Lauren Bacall's free-wheeling, glacial Slim. It's *Casablanca* all over again. But this time it's Bacall, with monstrous shoulder pads and a mouth as wide as the Riviera, who calls the shots in this legendary screen romance. They should slap a preservation order on this one: hands off, Mr Van Sant.

Carol Allen asks Mark Herman whether his *Little Voice* can match the success of *Brassed Off*

Tuned into the angels of the north

By his own admission, the film-maker Mark Herman is "not a big fan of the theatre". But six years ago he went to see his friend Alison Steadman in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, a new play by Jim Cartwright at the National Theatre. He was "towed over by it."

"What was magical was its beatificity — its enclosed nature, its heightened language and its reliance on Little Voice singing those songs, doing all those impressions of people like Judy Garland and Marilyn Monroe as a live performance. All the things which would make it difficult to turn into a screenplay."

"In fact I went with someone who was considering making it into a film. I said I'd hate to have that job. Then, 18 months ago, I was asked to make the film."

The intervening years saw attempts at writing the screenplay had been made. There was even talk of moving the story from northern England to America, with names such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Brad Pitt and Meryl Streep being bandied in the main roles. Then came the success of *Thelma & Louise*, the Full Monty and Herman's own *Brassed*

Off, and suddenly *Little Voice* in its original setting was looking feasible to the film's American backers. Herman set about writing a screenplay which dealt with the challenges he had spotted years earlier.

Brenda Blethyn, now a name in America after her Oscar nomination for *Secrets and Lies*, was cast as Marie, Little Voice's blowsy, bullying mother of a mother. Ewan McGregor, with whom Herman had worked on *Brassed Off*, was offered the role of Billy, Little Voice's shy suitor, and Michael Caine said that he was "interested" in playing Ray, the sleazy promoter who sees a chance to revive his fortunes by exploiting Little Voice's talent. "He was desperate to do it," Herman says. "He saw a chance to do something that he cared about, like *Hannah and Her Sisters* and *Educating Rita*."

By now there was no question that Jane Horrocks would recreate on film the title role of Marie's inarticulate daughter, who expresses herself by imitating the legendary singers she was taught to love by her late father. Cartwright wrote the part with Horrocks's talents in mind, and Herman



Herman: "I said I would hate to have to turn *Little Voice* into a film. Then, 18 months ago, I was asked to do that"

was determined to keep the feeling of live performance. "I wanted to get that immediacy I felt in the theatre," he says. "We haven't got some Judy Garland impressionist to put the voice on, which is what would have happened if we'd used another actress. The songs are all Horrocks's voice recorded as we filmed her on the set, which was a real nightclub in Scarborough."

There are, Herman admits, similarities between *Little Voice* and his previous film *Brassed Off*. "They both make you laugh, make you cry and listen to a bit of music, but this has got a real fairytale strand which makes it very different. When we were looking for locations we went round Bolton, Rochdale, all those industrial towns like the one where the play is set. But there were too many echoes of brass bands and stripping steelworkers. So I set it in Scarborough. Also, by then we were thinking of

Caine. Being Michael, he had to be a Londoner and I don't believe a Londoner could exist in Rochdale. Nobody would believe it. But you can accept him in a seaside entertainment town."

Herman speaks with the authority of a native. A burly Yorkshireman who has retained his accent, he could pass for a farmer or indeed a businessman, big in bacon importing, like his father. Now 44, he was born in Bridlington, and worked for several years in the family business.

In his mid-twenties he decided bacon was not for him and used his talent for cartoon drawing to get a place at the local art school, moving from there to the National Film and Television school, initially to study animation. Looking at the competition there — one contemporary was Nick Park — he moved to live action and won a short film Oscar with his graduation film, *See You At Wembley*, Frankie Walsh.

He spent the next two years writing for the BBC and struck lucky with a song lyric for the Christians which became the hit *Ideal World*. Then his screenplay *Blame It on the Bellboy* was taken up by Disney. The film, a farce with Dudley Moore, flopped. Herman, by now married with children, had to sell his London house and move back north. Work was hard to find until he abandoned attempts to write "commercial" scripts and wrote something he cared about. The result was *Brassed Off*, and suddenly Herman was back in the game.

He is reluctant to say too much about his next project. "Whatever it is, I'll certainly be writing it, and it will be an original idea — but it won't feature music or be set in Yorkshire. If I make films much closer to home I'll be making them in my own street."

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RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

LONDON

KRAPP'S LAST TAPE: Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient neurotic, replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed *Smooch* — total playing time 35 minutes. Arts Theatre (0171-836 3334). Opens tonight, 8pm.

POULSEN CENTENARY: The French composer's birthday is celebrated with a gala concert featuring a glittering array of musical ensembles. Falco, Lot, Ian Bostridge, the Nash Ensemble and others, perform the composer's works. Returns only. Wigmore Hall (0171-835 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

SOUTH BANK JAZZ: While the Purcell Room continues to provide young classical musicians in its PUG series, the OEH plays hosts to a veteran of popular music. Celebrating 40 successful years in the business, Georgie Fame is joined in a concert by the BBC Big Band directed by Steve Gray. Queen Elizabeth Hall (0171-690 4242). Tonight, 8pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
House full, returns only. Some seats available. Seats at all prices.

COURT IN THE ACT: 19th-century French farce by Hennequin and Velez, casting the law with its trousers down. Orange Tree (011-940 3633). 8pm.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE: The D'Oyly Carte Company brings Gilbert and Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirates, policemen and a modern major-general to the West End. Queen's (0171-494 8041).

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: Tom Goodman-Hill and Dominic Rowen play the estranged friends in Edward Hall's pleasing 16th-century comedy. PR (0171-638 8891).

CHICAGO: Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and folk tale. Adelphi (0171-344 0059). 8pm.

DICK BARTON SPECIAL AGENT: Journey back to the 1940s with the famous old radio thriller, brought to life by Phil Wilton. Ted Craig directs. Warehouse, Croydon (0181-690 4065).

JESUS MY BOY: Tom Conti in John Dowling's faithful touring production.

ACE OF CLUBS: Neil Coward's musical comedy (songs include *Get Away and Something About a Sailor*) closing in 1999 and set in a seedy Soho night club. Wimbledon Studio (0181-540 0362). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm.

THE GOLDEN COCKADE: After several cancellations caused by his illness, Richard Rodney Bennett is now back on his feet and scheduled to conduct tonight's performance by the Royal Opera of Rimsky-Korsakov's sparkling fairy tale cum political satire. Sadler's Wells (0171-713 5000). Tonight, 7pm.

ELSEWHERE

MANCHESTER: Lawrence Foster conducts the Hallé Orchestra in an evening of mostly Spanish music. Top of the list are these pieces by Falla, followed by Salvador Briceno's *Tramontana* Concerto, and a flute sonata by Montsalvage. Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony concludes the programme. Bridgewater Hall (0161-607 5000). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE SNOWMAN: The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production. Peacock, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

THE KING AND I: Whistle a happy tune with Phil Wilton's Steam Factory production of the long-lost Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. PR (0171-223 2223). 8pm.

ARABIAN NIGHTS: Al Bano, Simba and lesser known tunes, adapted and reworked by Dominic Cooke for the Christmas show. Young Vic (0171-828 8383).

CINDERELLA: Neil Bartlett and the Shochend Pater team stage a sensationally modern version of Angela Carter's parable. Magic provided by Paul Kieve. Lyric (0181-741 8701/2211). 8pm.

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three drifty comic tales of drugs, dark, and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indigestible onslaught. With Stephen McCauley, Ewan Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan.

SITCOM (18): A French bourgeois family unites itself. Mildly diverting farce, ingeniously adapted to the small screen. Director, François Ozon.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a beleaguered planet. The return of the star of *Star Trek: Voyager*. Director, Jonathan Frakes.

CURRENT

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15): Will Smith's lawyer turns up in a political conspiracy. Excellent, fast-paced thriller, with Gene Hackman and Jon Voight.

THE MIGHTY (PG): Endowing tale of two outcast children, one halving, one crippled, who pool their resources. Peter Jackson directs.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15): Robin Williams wanders through the afterlife trying to find his loved ones.

Technically dazzling, but entangled by a woolly script.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U): Splendid animation, but there's not much for kiddies in the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites to the promised land. Voice talents include Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes.

BABE, PG IN THE CITY (U): Everyone's favourite talking pig faces the turkeys of the big city. Excellent, cheekily adapted to the big screen. Director, George Miller.

DANCING AT LUGHANSA (PG): Compressed and perky version of Brian Friel's play about the splintered dance in 19th-century Donegal. With Meryl Streep, Catherine McCormack and Kathy Burke. Director, Peter Kosminsky.

ON COMBAT LA CHANSON (PG): Romantic relationship comedy, with a marvelous cast and lip-synched matches of popular songs. Alain Resnais directs. Starring Jeanne Balme and André Dussollier.

TWILIGHT (15): Down-at-heel private investigator (Paul Newman) is hired into a murder mystery. Involving a plot, but a wonderful cast. With Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon, James Garner. Director, Robert Benton.

Monster without a punch

GODZILLA

Columbia TriStar, PG, 1998

THE budget was enormous. The hype was enormous. And the monster, offspring of genetic mutation, is scarcely a midget. It stomps through Manhattan, collapsing skyscrapers and sending debris flying: too big to have a personality or even any visual charm. Poor humans like Matthew Broderick's earnest scientist, Maria Piliello's TV reporter and Jean Reno's enigmatic Frenchman fight the beast's onslaught with shallow dialogue. If you like being bludgeoned by movies, *Godzilla* will knock you flat, but if you prefer blockbusters to be fun, prepare for disappointment. At least when you rent the film on video you can lower the sound level — something impossible in the cinema.

DREAM WITH THE FISHES

Columbia TriStar, 18, 1996

A BUTTONEED-DOWN drip bent on suicide joins forces with a wild heroin addict who is a few weeks away from dying. Finn Taylor's giddy black comedy set around San Francisco pays spirited homage to America's subversive films of the early 1970s, and whisks us along with enough jaunty energy to keep the tone tapping. Real feelings are not neglected either. The engaging cast includes David Arquette, Brad Pitt and Kathryn Erbe. A rental release.

NEW VIDEO RELEASES

FETISHES

Blue Light, 18, 1996

DOCUMENTARY maverick Nick Broomfield wades into delicate territory in this funny, unsettling and educational peek into a sadomasochistic sex parlour in Manhattan. The spectacle gets a bit rough, although any revulsion at watching Wall Street brokers trussed up in rubber is wiped out by the sad thought that clients are driven to such extremes by unfulfilled emotional needs. Broomfield himself shifts ground during filming from being an uneasy observer of an alien world to a mildly sympathetic explorer of human peculiarities.

MAD CITY

Warner, 18, 1998

STORIES about media manipulation come ten a penny these days, so it is just as well this trudge through familiar territory features two big stars. John Travolta plays an ordinary Joe, a museum security guard thrust into the limelight when he accidentally shoots a aggressive reporter who gets the whole country watching the affair on TV. Narrative performance is subtle, but this is a film of broad effects, enjoyable as far as it goes, directed with an appropriate sweep by Costa-



Godzilla lays waste to Manhattan, and to all traces of subtlety, in the most unwisely hyped film of last year

Conras, the earnest director of *Z and Missing*. A rental release.

THE PROPOSITION

PolyGram, 12, 1998

ONE of last year's most risible films,

featuring Kenneth Branagh in priest's robes and ginger hair, and William Hurt and Madeleine Stowe as a pushy Boston couple in the 1930s who need a male surrogate to conceive a child. Hurt and Stowe put up

a valiant fight trying to make impossible characters seem real, while Branagh just looks embarrassed. Rent it, and laugh.

Geoff Brown

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Value-for-money Elgar; archive voices; and an historic reconstruction of a Bach Mass

ORCHESTRAL

ELGAR

Falstaff, Elgar, Sanguine Fan

Philharmonia/Lloyd-Jones

Naxos 8 553879 ** £4.99

ELGAR's character portrait of Sir John Falstaff incorporated a broad vision of human existence. "Over it all runs (even in the tavern) the undercurrent of our failings and sorrows," he told the critic Ernest Newman. A sensitive reading therefore needs to catch the underlying melancholy as well as the surface braggadocio, and David Lloyd-Jones makes a fair attempt in this new version for Naxos. There is certainly, in the final pages, a sense of resignation after the vicissitudes of a disreputable life.

Perhaps a more generous recorded space would have put it all into better perspective but the English Northern Philhar-



Elgar: "failings and sorrows"

monia generally emerges as victor over the wildly skittering passage-work it is given. The various episodes are helpfully cued and at budget price this is a very acceptable issue, especially with the coupling of the moving *Elegy* and the engaging music from the ballet *The Sanguine Fan*.

BARRY MILLINGTON

OPERA

STARS OF ENGLISH

Volume 4

Dutton CDLX 7030 ** £10.99

THE title is deliberately left open to interpretation. Only one of the operas here, *Semele*, is English and several of the items are sung in the original language. Quite a few of the "stars" were born abroad and came here to make their careers. But what's in a name? Dutton has once again raided the archives to find recordings of those who might have been heard with English companies between the 1920s and the 1950s.

Old Dutton favourites are back on display, led by two tenors expert in the art of the serenade: the liquid voice of Tano Ferencsik in Donizetti and Massenet and the robust, more patrician Heddle Nash

in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. Nash also appears with Joan Hammond in Harlequin's serenade from *Pagliacci*. Neither sounds too comfortable in Leoncavallo. Nor will the Duca in *Rigoletto* be the role for which James Johnston will be best remembered.

Radios are provided by Michael Langdon as the villain in Weber's *Euryanthe* and Ottavio Kraus in Smetana's *Libuše*. Some of the mezzo-soprano too, but Gladys Ripley is in succulent voice with Dalia's Act 1 aria from Saint-Saëns's *Samson*, with Sir Malcolm Sargent and the Liverpool Phil.

JOHN HIGGINS

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

CHORAL

BACH

Epiphany Mass

Gabrieli Consort/McCreesh

Archiv 457 631-2 (two CDs) ** £20.99

ONE can almost smell the frankincense and myrrh rising from Paul McCreesh's latest virtuoso historic reconstruction: Bach's Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany, as it might have been celebrated in the Church of St Thomas in Leipzig, circa 1740.

In this recreation of the colourful mosaic of music which formed the Lutheran liturgy, not one tiny stone of authenticity has been left unturned. The singers of the Gabrieli Consort and the period instruments of the Gabrieli Players are gathered in the wooden gallery around the organ; the congregational choirs of Freiberg and Dresden sing lustily

below. And in two generous 80-minute discs, church bells ring out, gospels and epistles are intoned, fantasias, preludes and toccatas are played on two historic Saxon organs. And there is even a sermon — though only, I hasten to add, six of Martin Luther's customary 60 minutes.

All of this frames Bag's *Mass*: *Breve* in F, with McCreesh's fingerprints dancing unmistakably over the sprightly articulation of the *Chorale* and the *Cantata* BWV 65 and 10, buoyant in their instrumental textures and their chorale. The great event ends with both the organ prelude and the hymn *Von Himmel hoch* as magnificent finale.

HILARY FINCH

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★★ Worth considering

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VISUAL ART

Dali in Liverpool

VISUAL ART: John Russell Taylor wonders if an impressive Liverpool show can restore the Surrealist to fashion

Will the real Dali ever stand up?

At the moment Matisse is fashionable. De Chirico, despite valiant attempts to reinstate his later manner, is unfashionable. And Salvador Dali? Will Dali be a problem. Not exactly fashionable, but never actually dismissed from the story of major 20th-century art, he hangs in a sort of limbo — a limbo that is largely of his own making. *Salvador Dali: A Mythology*, the big show at the Tate Gallery in Liverpool this month, attempts to define that limbo, and maybe, if possible, extract Dali from it.

The problem is one with which our Post-Modernism has particular difficulty. One can hardly discuss Dali without invoking the dreaded S-word, and how can we seriously consider Sincerity when so much of the art all round us is built quite deliberately on parody and pastiche? There is no doubt that in the years since his death Dali has become a value because of all the tales mostly well authenticated of his signing reams and reams of blank paper ready to receive the sort of pseudo-Dali "original graphics" which multiply in one-in-a-lifetime opportunities as far as Vegas hotels. Why did he do it? For money? Or as yet another outrageous gesture in a life that was largely and regrettably devoted to self-publicity?

It is not that out of one would have to probe Dali's psyche, and to do that one has to feel that it is worthwhile. Clearly Fiona Bradley, and Dawn Ades, curators of the new exhibition think it is. They have chosen to approach Dali by way of one of his recurrent visual references, that arising from his preoccupation since childhood with Millet's endlessly popular painting *The Angelus*. For details of how the obsession developed we are, of course, dependent largely on Dali's own testimony, which may or may not be trustworthy.

An introductory room shows various things which he claims to have gone into the myth's evolution. These range from the coffee-set decorated

entirely with reproductions of *The Angelus*, which once caught his eye in the window of a Catalan junk shop, to saucy postcards turning on a hat held very much as Millet's praying peasant is holding his — but, in the case of the postcard's bearded professor confronted with a pack of nubile schoolgirls while drying himself from a skinny-dip, held in such a way as to conceal a straining erection.

The sheer variety of these peripheral references suggests something of Dali's catholicity of taste as well as his principled irreverence about the letter reaches of art. In his own work the Millet image constantly recurs, now dominating a painting, now lurking, tiny, somewhere in the distance, now mixed with some other myth, such as that of Narcissus. One way that Dali approaches *The Angelus* is to see it as a burial, much as Edwardian postcard publishers rechristened the picture "Burying Baby".

Another, on which he insisted more emphatically in later life, was to concentrate on what he claimed to see as a strong sexual subtext, which in its final form cast the peasant woman as a praying mantis, about to consume her husband after sex, and his gesture with the hat as primarily to protect his genitals. (A sensible Lancashire lady next to me wisely observed to her friends that it was "too high for that").

Obviously the word "sensible" could never be applied to Dali, being as irrelevant to his art as "sincere". He was a showman, a show-off, an illusionist: he deliberately challenged his public to find him out, to discover where the divine madness ended and the commercial calculation began.

To an extent, nevertheless, it is possible to see Dali as a serious person trying to find a personal language within the manifold paradoxes of Surrealism, and evolving a personal mythology as he goes. This does not necessarily have any-



Blues for the muse: the figure of "Gradiwa" in *Girl with Curfs*, painted in 1926, reappears in many of the artist's mysterious works

thing much to do with Millet: quite often, in fact, it seems more like Dali's attempt to find his way to whatever reality is embodied in his dreams and visions.

The figure of "Gradiwa", for instance, which frequently recurs in mysterious paintings such as *Girl with Curfs* (1926), tries to make sense of an abstracted vision Dali frequently had of a girl who was

looking away from him so that he never saw her face but nevertheless sensed that she was an unknown goddess who would one day be fully revealed to him. (Of course he eventually decided that he was vouchsafed a mystic revelation of her identity when he first met his notorious dark muse, his wife Gala.)

Perhaps his preoccupation with

The Angelus was the same sort of quest for illumination, perhaps not. Did it really mean a lot to him, or was the preoccupation merely a sort of personal Camp? Difficult to tell. If Congreve was right that affection sufficiently persisted in becomes nature, then Dali was surely starting at the wrong end: the visual references which seem fairly natural come earlier in the career, and

the nearer we get to the publication of his absurd tome *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus* in 1963, the more frantic, dragged-in and dragged-out it all appears. On this evidence, it looks as if Dali may have to stay in his limbo for some time yet.

● Dali is at the Tate Gallery, Albert Dock, Liverpool 0151-709 0507 until Jan 31

TOMORROW

New pop albums reviewed

Meeting of like spirits

There is never any shortage of individual discoveries to be made as the Park Lane Group presents its annual showcase of young musicians and composers. But rarely does the art of creator and re-creator meet in a moment of real imaginative fusion. Such a moment happened on Tuesday when the 22-year-old Edinburgh-born violinist Daniel Bell gave the premiere of two short pieces composed for him last year by Huw Watkins. Bell's intense playing and the energy of Watkins's *Coruscation* and *Reflection* were immediately and irresistibly engaging. The serrated rhythmic edges of the bold first piece, and the melancholy, lyrical unfolding of the second revealed imaginative daring and technical assurance in composer and performer.

Bell went on to give a bracingly fluent performance of Schoenberg's 1949 *Fantasy* before turning, with Watkins as pianist, to Elliott Carter's Duo for violin and piano. This really showed the stuff of which this remarkable young violinist is made. Toughness and refinement co-existed in a single movement work of formidable complexity. Bell embodied its eve-

RECITALS

PLG Young Artists Purcell Room

ry shifting pattern. I can't wait to hear him again.

Bell and Watkins had shared the recital with harpist Catherine Beynon, and here too was something special. After palms, nails, knuckles, hands and feet had been put through the necessary repertoire of paces set up by Luciano Berio in his *Sequenza II*, Beynon gave the premiere of Martyn Harry's *Regenstimmchen*. This evocation of "rain voices", inspired by childhood memories of rain beating on a roof, was commissioned by Beynon. The piece complemented the Berio by offering musical rather than virtuosic challenges in its hypnotic cross-echoes of rhythm and metre. And it confirmed Beynon as a harpist of particular finesse.

The regenerative force of the PLG's work throughout its history was felt earlier in the evening when the young Marais Ensemble, a flexible combination of wind, quartet, quintet and piano, performed Judith Weir's *Airs from Another Planet*, commissioned by the Nash Ensemble, itself once featured by the PLG group. This winsome fantasy on traditional Scottish music marooned on Mars revealed the keen imagination of this ensemble, even if Ligeti's Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet challenged its finer points of ensemble.

HILARY FINCH

A ravishing view of King Mozart

OPERA: In Belgium Hugh Canning sees how David McVicar's *Idomeneo* has got better and better

With Mozart's first stage masterpiece, the opera seria *Idomeneo, King of Crete*, David McVicar scored a triumph for Scottish Opera on a shoe-string — in 1985 he spent less than £1000 on his own (initial) second strikingly handsome costume designs to create perhaps the most rapidly beautiful piece of music-theatre the Glasgow-based company has given its audiences in the past few years or more.

It was inevitable that McVicar would be invited to recreate elsewhere and that has just happened at the Vlaamse Opera in Antwerp, where his new production has been greeted with rapturous acclaim by Belgian critics.

As a properly funded company — unlike Scottish Opera — the Flemings can afford a little more in the way of scenery, and this time McVicar has the luxury of a set designer in Michael Vale, whose visual aesthetic is no less simple and austere than McVicar's: where the Scottish *Idomeneo* took place in a platform and against backdrops of unrelieved black, here there is a modicum of Mediterranean wafting a sandy-coloured, lozenge-shaped acting area which ebbed off front corner just over the pit. The backdrop that time is a wall of plaided wood which parts horizontally to reveal a giant mask of Neptune with flames with the sea-god's monster emerges from the brine to claim his victims.

McVicar is admirably sparing with scenic effects such as

this: during the storm which seems to rise organically out of Elektra's tempestuous first aria, *Tutto nel cor mi sento*, a rope descends from the flies and an acrobatic dancer writhes and wriggles like a sailor desperately struggling with the rigging of a ship. In Glasgow, the back-curtains parted to reveal the Cretan King and his navy pleading for divine aid in their tussle with the elements — an arresting image, albeit one which contradicted Mozart's instruction for Idomeneo's men to sing their cries off-stage. In Antwerp the dancer's rope-trick is scarcely less striking, evoking the astonishing turbulence of Mozart's music.

What I admire most about McVicar's work, particularly in the potentially stiff and formalised world of opera seria, is the tension he generates out of stasis. He rarely, if ever, undresses the genre by inventing distracting business to alleviate the supposed "boredom" factor of one singer delivering a long *da capo* aria to another without theatrics. What he does do, however, is direct his singers to extract every ounce of pathos and feeling with a body language and delivery of the text that can be dramatically riveting. As in Scotland, the great emotional confrontations between the Iliad and Idomeneo, Idomeneo and the son whose life he has compromised with his rash oath to Neptune, and Elektra's with her own tortured ego, bristle with high drama. Equally, McVicar can create the most beautiful scenic ef-



Cretan and spartan: David McVicar's production of *Idomeneo* in Antwerp retains its simple and austere aesthetic

fects with the simplest of means: the ambience for Iliad's Act III "garden" aria is evoked with a shower of rose petals. Ravishing!

Where he departs most radically from his Scottish *Idomeneo* is in the musical edition. Where in Glasgow Nicholas McGegan opted for Mozart's Vienna revision of 1786 with the castrato role of Idomeneo transposed and adapted for tenor, the Flemish Opera's (soon to be ex) music director, Marc Minkowski, favours the 1781 Munich original. He makes cuts sanctioned by Mozart — Idomeneo's *No, la morte io non pavento* ("No, I fear not death") and Idomeneo's valedictory *Torna la*

Pace ("Let peace return") are the chief casualties — but otherwise this is an unusually full text incorporating not only the magnificent longer version of Elektra's hair-raising *O smania, o furia* ("Oh, torments, oh furies") but the complete concluding ballet.

Minkowski conducts the modern instrument Flanders Opera orchestra with an Elliot Gardiner-like élan, although he indulges occasionally in Harmoniconesque extremes of tempo and mannered "expressive" rubatos which sound alien to Mozart.

It has to be conceded, however, that Elektra's two bad-hair

scenes — dazzlingly sung by the Canadian soprano Lyne Fordin — were thrilling. Indeed, from the vocal point of view this was an *Idomeneo* which would not have seemed out of place at Glyndebourne: Veronika Cengemil is a small-scale but unerringly musical Iliad, while Hanne Fischer, deputising at very short notice for the indisposed Magdalena Kozina, sang Idomeneo's not always rewarding music quite beautifully and their voices blended exquisitely in their duet and the great quartet. Both singers have Glyndebourne experience behind them, as does Richard Croft, an unusually youthful and lyrical Idomeneo who sang the

daunting coloratura of the long version of *Fuor del mar* ("Saved from the sea") without bating an eyelid. The baritone Russell Smythe effortlessly encompassed the tenor range and florid writing of Arbace's part. With an outstanding High Priest in the celebrated Flemish Bach evangelist, Guy de Mey, and a terrific young French bass, Nicolas Testé, as the Voice of Neptune, this was an *Idomeneo* cast without weaknesses. I recommend catching McVicar's beautiful staging when it transfers to the opera house in Ghent — a short hop on Eurostar via Lille — this month. There are more performances on January 10, 12, 14, 16.

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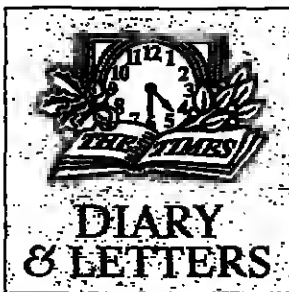
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BOOKS

Supernatural
charm for
animal spirits

BRENDA MADDOX comes up with a fascinating thesis in her forthcoming book on the poet W. B. Yeats, *George's Ghosts* (Picador). She thinks that the automatic writing dictated by the spirits to Yeats's wife George, who was a medium, was in fact a ruse on her part — conscious or unconscious — to get Yeats into bed with her at the right time to produce a child. "If you interpret the mystic instructions carefully," Maddox tells us, "they read just like Marie Stopes." Anyway, Yeats got some wonderful metaphors from the spirits, George got her child, and the marriage — which had been in danger — was saved.

Is a new collector's item coming on to the market? Several publishers, including Pan, Penguin and Hodder, have been sending out proof copies of a selection of their 1999 books nicely boxed up in specially printed cases. Other recent attempts to persuade literary editors and booksellers to look at advance proofs include a



special binding for the proof copy itself — as when Cape sent out proofs of Julian Barnes's French short stories, *Cross Channel*, done up to look like a Gallimard paperback. All very well — provided the publishers make sure they correct the proofs carefully too.

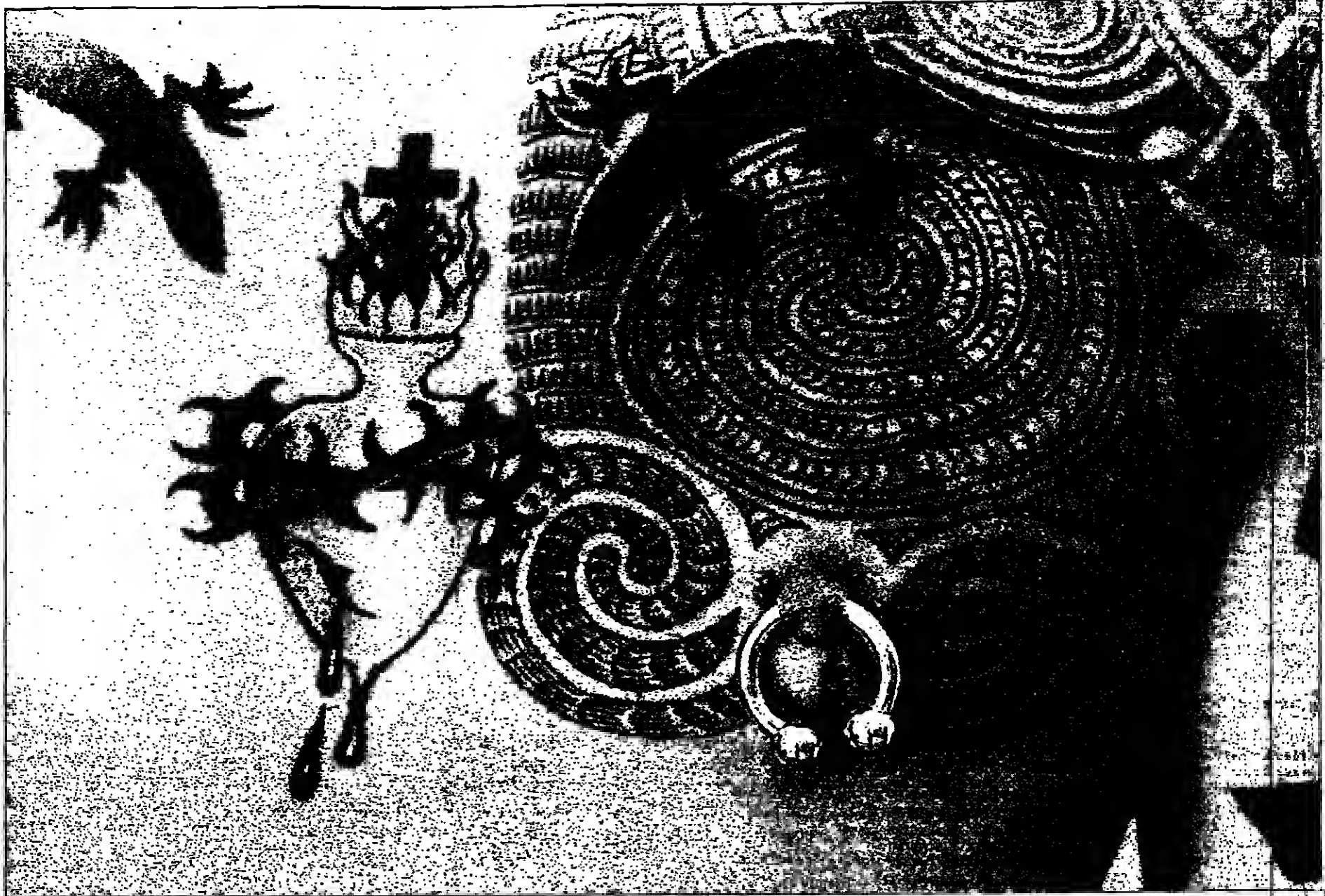
A DAGGER will be thrust through the heart of an historical crime writer in March. But it will not draw blood, for this is the Ellis Peters Historical Dagger, a new award recently created by the Crime Writers' Association in honour of Peters, the inventor of monkish crimes and mysteries. Crime stories set at any time up to 1965 are eligible.

Is this to be the year of the potato? The spud has not been much celebrated in literature, though Kipling in one of his Barrack-Room Ballads has a soldier who says his mouth is like a rotten potato. But 1999 will see both a learned history of the neglected vegetable, *The Potato* by Larry Zweigman (Macmillan), and a powerful defence of it, *Potatoes Not Potatoes*, by Kathleen DesMaisons (Simon & Schuster).

OR is 1999 to be the year of the pig? A history of this virtuous animal, including everything from its image to its squeal, *Think Pig* by Robert Malcolmson and Stephanos Mastoris, is due shortly from the Hambleton Press. The publisher's publicity observes that it is "the ideal present to give to ex-husbands".

THIS SATURDAY
IN metro

In his own words: Whitbread shortlisted novelist, Ronan Bennett, talks about his experiences as a teenager, his wrongful conviction for the murder of a policeman, his time inside Long Kesh prison and his book, *The Catastrophist*. ALSO: Harry Ritchie reviews John Burnham Schwartz's hit-and-run drama, *Reservation Road*; Marcel Berlins on *Every Dead Thing*, "the most terrifying read since *The Silence of the Lambs*"; and take number two as Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy* appear in paperback.



Jenkins is a cautious guide on her grand tour of physical culture. She avoids the seamy worlds of drugs and stripping, preferring instead the beaten path of tattoos and body piercing.

Just a taste of transgression

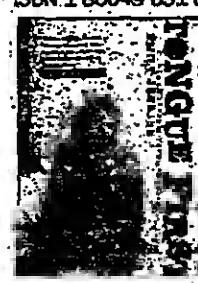
There is much less to this book than meets the eye. Having said that you can see how it began — a seductive little proposal on an American editor's desk: young hip journo from New York walks the wild side of modern culture (sex, drugs, therapy, body decoration) and sends back witty postcards from the edge. A travel book of the senses for the Bridget Jones generation. Irre-

sistible. Sure to be instant cult stuff. Alas, many a slip between proposal and realisation. The title doesn't help — *Tongue First: Adventures in Physical Culture*. It's obviously meant to sound sexy. Slipping that lithe, rouscular little organ into all manner of naughty places: strip joints, tattoo parlours, bags of heroin, health farms, isolation tanks, designer dress stores and an appoint-

ment with an acupuncturist. Spot the first deliberate mistake. Jenkins doesn't know the difference between cultural transgression and late 20th-century lifestyle. Now, that in itself could make an interesting thesis: decadence as an everyday appendage of consumer society, but Emily Jenkins is not the right chronicler for that. She is too much a victim of the disease to be its analyst.

What is remarkable about her book is the way she makes everything, from her first sort of heroin to shopping in a charity shop, equally unilluminating. This is because she is more intent on observing than experiencing. It is as if she had continually got the pen in her hand. Even as the heroin hits her brain she's looking for a way to equate Coleridge with the street junkie. She continually elevates the banal to the profound. So in a chapter about body decoration she makes observations like: "By wearing make-up a person goes into dialogue with commonly held ideas about femininity. In painting my-

SARAH DUNANT
TONGUE FIRST
Adventures in
Physical Culture
By Emily Jenkins
Vibron, £9.99
ISBN 1 85049 631 8



face I actively bring myself in line with the convention of what a woman is, here and now." To which the response of the average intelligent reader is: "Well, yes, Emily. So? And?" The trouble is the "So?" or the "And?" never comes. Part of the reason is that she is just not a good enough writ-

er. Teasing genuine meaning out of popular culture is the equivalent of breeding lilacs out of the dead land. It may look easy enough but it takes a hell of a life force to achieve it. And for all her apparent courage, life force is not Jenkins's strong point. As a self-appointed guide through physical culture she turns out to be disarmingly wimpy. She tries heroin, but only, once, and not enough seriously to lose it. She stays up for nights on end to experience the sensory deprivations of sleeplessness, but then invites her boyfriend round and falls asleep in his arms.

Admittedly she has a tattoo, but hers is as transgressive as she gets, and when it comes to walking anywhere near her own wild side she is decidedly prissy. She talks about stripping and sex for money, but she never tries it. She is uncomfortable with anyone touching her body during massage and when confronted with the suggestion of colonic irrigation her response is: "I should say up front that I'm not going to

get a tube stuck up my ass or the sake of literature." For a book which claims to flirt with the excesses of physical culture, this is like leaving bee camp in the Himalayas with a guide who turns out to be scared of heights.

I'm aware this is a cruel review. And at any reviewer will admit, it is much easier to bury a book than to praise it. So let me end by saying that the faults of this book are perhaps less to do with Emily Jenkins herself than with the world that she seeks to analyse. It doesn't take a morose to observe that we are living in a culture where it is hard to tell indulgence from enlightenment on your credit card bill and where sensation is regularly mistaken for feeling. It is a treacherous terrain for the writer. Maybe if Jenkins had travelled without her pen and her contract she might have found the journey both more frightening and rewarding. But then what would we have done with the book proposal?

The never-ending story

Borges called his style Baroque, defined as that which "deliberately exhausts (or tries to exhaust) its own possibilities". For Borges, Baroque is not a term of abuse — as it usually is when applied to architecture — it is a last paragraph. It is the final stage of all art, the point where "art flaunts and squanders its resources".

Borges was 55 when he wrote that. He was halfway through the century and the century was halfway through itself. As a point in time, the view in any direction was not good: war behind and Cold War present and ahead. As a point in time for Borges it was the usual question mark — and all his stories are question marks, this time applied with extra force. The force was his own work. He was writing an introduction to his early fictions, written in the 1930s.

For any writer, this would be a moment of self-doubt, but place it midway through a century of self-doubt, and the result is likely to be a reaching towards some sort of end-time. Borges's "final stage of art" is exactly the cultural pessimism that Susan Sontag argued against in her 1965 essay, *One Culture and the New Sensibility*. The argument is not over. There are plenty of people who talk about the death throes of art, though unlike Borges, most of them have never created anything in their own right.

I don't want to criticise Borges; there is no point in that. I would rather learn from him, the way one can learn from good writers: by understanding them in their context and recognising that they will always write outside their con-

text. Everyone has to live in their own time, but artists live too in their imagination, and this is a force as profound and decisive as the context of their lives. Out of the tension between context and imagination is formed the work.

Borges's work does not end. It begins. His best-known piece, *The Garden of Forking Paths* (1944), uses the simple plot of a Chinese man, working as a German spy, escaping from his pursuer. He comes to the house of an eminent Sinologist who reveals to him the lost labyrinth of one of his own ancestors. The labyrinth, and the book that accompanies it, do and do not exist, just as the present does and does not exist. The brutal ending of the story, an event in time, if ever there was one, does not contradict the strangeness of what has been offered. It reads as a whim, a way out that is not an end but the visible tail of a forking path.

Time is the big discovery of the 20th century. From Einstein to Stephen Hawking we have become fascinated by it. We know now that time is not just a measure, it is a player, though what kind of player we do not know. Borges's fictions juggle with the possibilities of time: movement across it, dopelgangers, memory loops, the effects of time on time itself. Some pieces, such as *A Weary Man's Utopia* are time-travel explorations out of the mould of H. G. Wells. Others, like *Borges and I* or *The Encounter* open up spaces for later writers — one thinks particularly of Georges Perec and Italo Calvino. *The Garden of the*

JEANETTE WINTERSON
COLLECTED FICTIONS
By Jorge Luis Borges
Allen Lane, £20
ISBN 0 713 99299 7



Forking Paths is the basis for Calvino's *If on a Winters Night a Traveller* (1979), a novel that begins itself over and over again and at its end is consumed by its own metaphors. If Borges avoids endings, and he does, it is because as a writer he is suspicious of anything so neat. The untidiness of his work is a clue to its potential. Even the shortest pieces, less than a page, refuse the satisfaction of something finished. His story, *August 25th 1936*, is a dialogue with his own separate, bad-tempered self, scrapping over work done and not done, admitting that it is all a failure but taking a healthy side-swipe at the vanity and terror of wanting to produce "a masterpiece".

Borges's masterpiece is the whole work, his life's work, read together, separate and complete, like his beloved *Thousand and One Nights*. This volume of collected fiction, published to celebrate the centenary of Borges's birth in

1899, is a good thing and a bad thing. Good because the fictions can be read and compared one against the other, bad because the gap of time have been closed up so that the reader is tempted to run in where he or she should pause. It is a pity that we cannot have a boxed set of the individual volumes, sometimes as much as 11 years apart.

Andrew Hurley's translations read well and the look of the books is pleasing. Some of the earliest stories seem redundant now, perhaps because they were really sketches for the wonderful things written later, or perhaps because, if it's final it rates that interest you will want Kathy Acker, not Borges. And yet, Acker loved Borges work and no doubt found space for herself therein the simultaneity of time the writer makes for one another. It is no surprise that *The Garden of the Forking Paths* should have been published in the same year as T. S. Eliot's *Selected Four Quartets*. Eliot's meditation on time sits best with Borges's vertical assault on it; both contain the same truth: that there is no end, only a series of beginnings.

Borges the writer knew what Borges the man sometimes forgot — there is no last paragraph, no final stage in a late story, published in the 1980s. Paracelsus, old and despised and alone, takes the ashes of a rose thrown in the fire by a doubting disciple and pouring "the delicate stuff of ashes from one hand into the concave other, he whips out a single word. The sea appeared again."

30p

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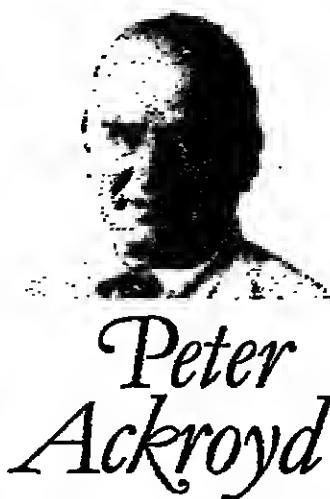
CHANGING TIMES

سكذامن زلاهل

BOOKS

Strange clothes but an emperor of tales

Peter Ackroyd is intrigued by the queer life of fable-spinner Hans Christian Andersen



Peter Ackroyd

The life of Hans Christian Andersen is rich in inadvertent humour. Never, perhaps, has so bizarre a figure crossed the stage of world literature. He was awkward, gangly and prone to hysterics. He was very plain and wore "grotesque" clothes, with a hat like an umbrella. He was also vain and self-obsessed in a most peculiar and theatrical way: when he was not bathed in tears, he was sending bursts of himself all over Europe.

Charles Dickens once described him as a "bony Danish bore". He seems always to have been ill at ease, with a habit of saying the wrong thing or arriving at the wrong moment. He was recorded as being "simple and child-like, and simpleminded in his manner". Yet from this apparently absurd person issued some of the most wonderful stories in the world.

How did it all begin? It began as a fairy story. Ostensibly he was the son of a lowly shoemaker and washerwoman in a small Danish town, yet Alison Prince seems to agree with other students of Andersen's life that he was in fact of royal birth — an illegitimate child who was foisted upon two peasants who happened also to be royal servants. There is no clear evidence to support this, except for the writer's astonishingly easy access to the royal court and his equally unusual self-belief evinced in such stories as *The Ugly Duckling*.

He was plainly desperate for affection and admiration, and his companions did their best to assist him. He went scrounging for meals like a stray cat, to use Alison Prince's admirable simile, a habit he never entirely lost in the days of wealth and fame. Even in these early years he was inordinately and almost comically ambitious, turning up unexpectedly on the doorsteps of any likely patron or theatrical manager. More often than not they invited him in like many ambitious people, he was lucky with his timing.

As an actor, he preferred his own scripts. His poetry was published in the newspapers, and his plays performed for two or three nights, but his initial exuberance was generally followed by dissatisfaction. His standards were, after all, very high: "Praise, infinite praise, as I have said so often, will have the most beneficial effect on me."

He left himself to be homeless in his own country, so everywhere else became his home. He travelled all his life, and yet he remained a bad traveller; in Italy, and Germany, and England, he complained of toothache and cold lodgings. He took young male companions with him, who soon tired of him and left him once more in tears. This raises the question of his homosexuality, which emerges in this biography

Change over to Euros

BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN
By Christopher Huhne & James Forder
Profile Books, £8.99, £13
ISBN 1 86197 107 9

IN the best hair-splitting economic and political argument since the Corn Laws, James Forder presents the arguments against the euro and European Monetary Union while Christopher Huhne speaks up for them. The debate is more lucid than usual, but no more illuminating. On one point Tweedledum and Tweedledee do agree: fast-paced change is very unnerving for the English who prefer to walk slowly up to their necks in deep waters rather than take a sudden plunge.

Terrible war

VICTORY 1918
By Alan Palmer
Weidenfeld, £25
ISBN 0 297 84124 6

THE Great War was a world war fought on three continents and many seas, and this outstanding history moves the British viewpoint from the middle distance of France and Flanders to encompass the broader strategic vision of neglected campaigns in the Balkans, Iraq, Palestine and Eastern Europe fought by many Allied forces. Palmer's style is as good as his judgment is daring. His book is a detailed and dramatic overview of the First World War that, 80 years on, has become conventionalised in our national memory.

Curtain up

GRACE, BEAUTY & BANJOS
By Michael Kilgarriff
Oberon Books, £19.95
ISBN 1 84002 008 3

SUBTITLED "Peculiar Lives and Strange Times of Music Hall and Variety Artists", this biographical dictionary is quirky in tone. The flicker of one-line or two-step turns that sparked briefly to life before falling off the stage into drink and despair is noted in an arch authorial voice that drops the curtain on his subjects like a panic-stricken stage-manager who realises that tonight's star bill is not only barely adequate but more than usually drunk. A reference book for aficionados of the tasteless, the tacky and the untalented.

Waltz along

RICHARD STRAUSS
By Michael Kennedy
Cambridge, £25
ISBN 0 521 58173 7

KENNEDY delivers a biography of Strauss that draws upon neglected first-hand source materials and analyses the crucial elements of the composer's life — his successful marriage, his long-standing collaborations with librettists von Hofmannsthal, Zweig, Gregor and Krauss, and the compromises Strauss made with the Third Reich. Lacking only a close critical analysis of the music, which Kennedy considers to have been well rehearsed elsewhere, this is a lively life that redresses some balances in previous biographical excursions.

IAIN FINLAYSON

Hey Leo, meet Nick

Lisa Jardine debunks the fantasy of a friendship that never was

THIS is a widely researched and well-illustrated book which brings together material largely unfamiliar to the general reader, concerning politics, diplomacy and technology in and around Florence at the beginning of the 16th century. Leonardo da Vinci is revealed to have made measured surveying drawings of Italian locations like the island of Imola and the Arno valley as exquisite as the background landscape to his *Mona Lisa* or *Virgin on the Rocks*. Machiavelli is discovered to have written as animatedly about engineering initiatives vital for military purposes as he did vividly in *The Prince* about the political tactics needed to hold on to power in an unstable state.

This is also the kind of book which gives the writing of popular history a thoroughly bad name. There is no evidence that Leonardo and Machiavelli ever actually met. There is good documentary material connecting both men with the failed engineering project to divert the course of the River Arno, initiated by the government of Florence in 1503-4. Machiavelli was Florentine emissary to Cesare Borgia while Leonardo was in Borgia's employment as an engineer in 1502. Tantalisingly, however, nothing survives to tell us that the two were ever in the same room together. Which makes Roger Masters' *Fortune is a River* — "a fascinating reconstruction of a unique friendship" — infuriating, teetering somewhere between history and fantasy.

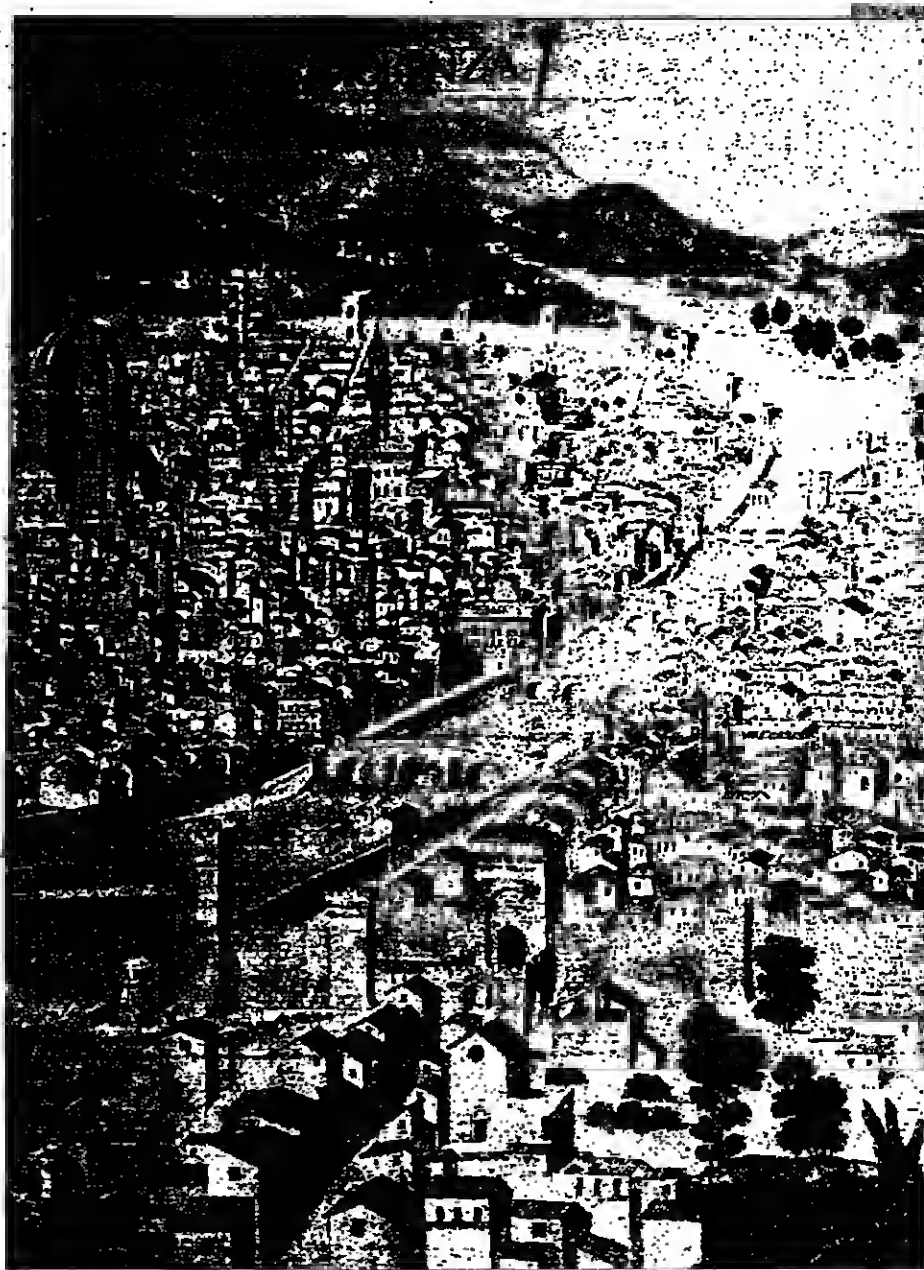
Actually, to be fair, it is hard to find a sentence in *Fortune is a River* where the circumspect author himself goes so far as to say that his two protagon-

FORTUNE IS A RIVER
By Roger D. Masters
Simon & Schuster, £17.99
ISBN 0 684 84452 4



ists ever had anything to do with one another. In the chapter called "The Meeting", Masters contrives only to say that the two were both in Imola at around the same time in 1502 — Leonardo surveying the island for Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli on a Florentine diplomatic mission. In the chapter called "The Collaboration Begins" he suggests only that Leonardo was hired by the Florentine government to work on surveying projects, and proposes that this is "hard to explain without assuming that Nicolo was already closely acquainted with the Borgia's former architect and general engineer". The grander claims, however, are plainly there in the chapter titles.

The jacket blurb goes a step further: there we find the claim boldly made that Leonardo and Machiavelli "formed a friendship", one between "two of history's great geniuses", and that "astonishingly, during the rich first decade of the 16th century, the pair joined together under the inspiration of one of Leonardo's most fantastic dreams" to build a system of canals which would give



Lovely and strategic city: A view of Florence in the 16th century by Fiamma della Cantena

Florence vital strategic access to the sea. The result of such carefully judged overstatement is thoroughly irritating. Masters' claims relatively little, and offers us a rather unexceptionable account of late Renaissance Italy. The publisher then "spins" this into a hold-your-breath piece of excitement, revealing a hitherto unknown historical story... though not, as it happens, a true one.

Roger Masters is a Professor of Government. He has his own agenda for loudly hoping his protagonists once met and shared their thoughts together. He wants to believe in what he dubs the

"mysterious friendship" between Leonardo and Machiavelli in order to argue that an intellectual collaboration between these two produced an importantly modern "science of power" long before Locke and the Age of Enlightenment. As a result of the Arno project, he suggests, Leonardo and Machiavelli came to understand together that, in the modern state, power depends on mastering the combined forces of new technology and a rational science of nature. This is a lesson, Masters argues, which we urgently need to learn today, in our present technologically driven times. He who controls the forces of technology controls the world. As Masters writes on his personal web-

page (whose address is conveniently given at the end of his book): "our civilisation faces a disaster unless we abandon the ideologies of left and right, returning to the more realistic, tough-minded assessment of human nature and history" developed by Machiavelli and Leonardo.

Every historian knows that you cannot afford to make up your historical data, or stretch credulity in the connections you make. General readers love history and biography precisely because they can count on them as "real". To avoid confusion I suggest Masters tell his book, in the currently fashionable manner, as the fiction it is — *Fortune is a River: A Novel*.

ROGER SCRUTON

ALL IN THE MIND
A Farewell to God
By Ludovic Kennedy
Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99
ISBN 0 340 68063 6



laws of logic. And if it is true, as Kant argued, that only in a world bound by cause and effect can there be consciousness and freedom, our world must be subject to the law of causality. In which case, the world,

and all things contained in it, evolve — to the point where God becomes perceivable. It is true that much sin has been committed in the name of Christ. As Kennedy tells us, the Spanish Inquisition murdered 10,000 innocent people over a period of 30 years. But with what do we compare this fact? With the crimes of the Muslims? With those of the Hindus? Or with those of the atheists? (The Soviet Communist Party, in its heyday, managed 10,000 murders a week.)

As for chastity and virginity, they are ideals, whose moral reality lies less in the achievement than in the attempt. Their beauty as ideals cannot be understood merely by observing the sordid antics of those who betray them. Why not study instead the medieval literature through which chastity shines like the sun through stained glass? Kennedy is at his most parochial in his mutterings about sex

A haunting for happiness

BEL MOONEY
SUFFRAGETTE CITY
By Kate Muir
Macmillan, £12.99
ISBN 0 333 74167 6



I wonder if this is the first millennium novel of the year? It won't be the last, that's for sure. In truth, the heading of the first chapter of *Suffragette City*, informing us that we are in August 1999, sets up a chain of expectations that are never quite fulfilled. The historical moment comes and goes in the narrative with little dramatic effect. No matter. Kate Muir has produced a novel which is consistently entertaining in addition to being well-constructed and stars a satisfyingly feisty heroine.

Albertine Andrews is an artist who likes to wander about with a padded stomach, to monitor the effect of pregnant women on passers-by in preparation for her series of pictures, *Confinement*. As always, *fin de siècle* Manhattan is sufficed with weirdos, wannabes, and wacky fashionable people. The city is hot and Albertine's existence has slumped to a halt in exhaustion: "I felt my life had truly bottomed out. I was right in the U-bend: my work stank, my room-mates stank, and I hadn't had sex for 187 days."

But things are about to change big time. First Albertine encounters a mysterious 30-something man wearing an eyepatch, who offers to help her with the laundry. Then Granny Rose brings along a trunk of letters that belonged to Albertine's great-great-grandmother Agnes McPhail — who (at the turn of the last century) was the 19-year-old wife of a dour Glaswegian preacher. During the night Albertine senses a presence in her room, reads the first of Agnes's letters... and a haunting begins, marking changes in work, fortune and love of which our heroine could not have dreamt.

How the letters lead Albertine to know long-dead Agnes

in her metamorphosis from timid wife to powerful suffragette, how her ghost becomes more and more irritating and corporeal, and how Albertine's frustrating love affair with the elusive Leonardo progresses despite Agnes's warnings make for a narrative which keeps you reading avidly until the last page. Muir's style is slick and witty, and 19th-century Glasgow is drawn with as much skill as the Big Apple, suspiciously wormy at the centre.

Deceptively light, this novel has a serious side. Maybe, in creating Albertine and Agnes, Kate Muir has drawn on twin aspects of her own personality, so that the wit, froth, and cynicism of modern journalism are tempered by an old-fashioned moral sense of what life is really about: family. Albertine's room-mate adopts a Chinese girl. Albertine gets pregnant and decides to keep the baby; Leonardo, despite the odds, is there, and we get a happy ending as deeply rooted in convention as it is possible to be. If this is the author's recipe for happiness in the next millennium it's fine by me.

Then bid adieu to your wife, as well

Waiting, as he puts it, in life's departure lounge, the 80-year-old Ludovic Kennedy has taken the opportunity to explain why he expects nothing after take-off. His book is a sincere and well-informed defence of atheism, which argues first, that God is a fiction, and secondly that it is better for us not to believe in him.

Kennedy is an optimist. He sees the decline in religious faith not as a moral or political disaster, but on the contrary as a sign of maturity, an opening of the collective mind to the truth of our condition, from which we can begin to repair our planet and lay the foundations for the happiness and freedom that centuries of superstition have curtailed.

In a nutshell Kennedy's thesis is this: "God" is no more than an idea in the human mind and denotes no reality, whether immanent or transcendental. Science — notably the theory of evolution — flies in the face of the "revealed truths" which are the jealously guarded heritage of the Christian churches. Moreover, in its attempt to protect its doctrine, Christianity has had recourse to cruelty and oppression on such a scale as to undermine its moral credibility.

For someone brought up since the war, among village atheists wedded to more or less vulgarised versions of those ideas, the first response is, I confess, a cavernous yawn. But Kennedy has the knack of awakening the critical spirit in his reader, and I found myself searching, after a while, for what I would imagine to be the Christian answer to his accusations. Here is my suggestion: "God" is certainly an idea in the mind. If you gave a complete scientific description of the world and all that is contained in it, God would not be mentioned. But if you gave a complete scientific description of your wife, detailing all the joints and vessels and neurones, she too would not be mentioned. That thing — the subject of consciousness — which is targeted in dialogue, has no place in the science of human life. So does your wife exist? Or is she only an idea in your mind? (And what does the word "only" mean in such a context?)

It is true that science has discredited the biblical story of the creation, if you take that story to be a literal truth, but has it been able to account for the fundamental fact, compressed in that story into a wonderful image, and fully confirmed by all the crimes which Kennedy goes on to document — the fact of original sin, and the seemingly inexorable connection between the extent of human knowledge and the extent of human wrongdoing? God moves in a mysterious way, but even he obeys the

— drawing his arguments from the sex-obsessed feminist Uta Ranke-Heinemann, and ignoring all but the downside of the thing that he describes. Look in his indictment for the names of St Teresa of Avila, or our own Julian of Norwich, and you will look in vain. But it is they who are the authorities on chastity. And if you think Christianity has been destructively repressive about sex, try living in a Muslim country for a few months.

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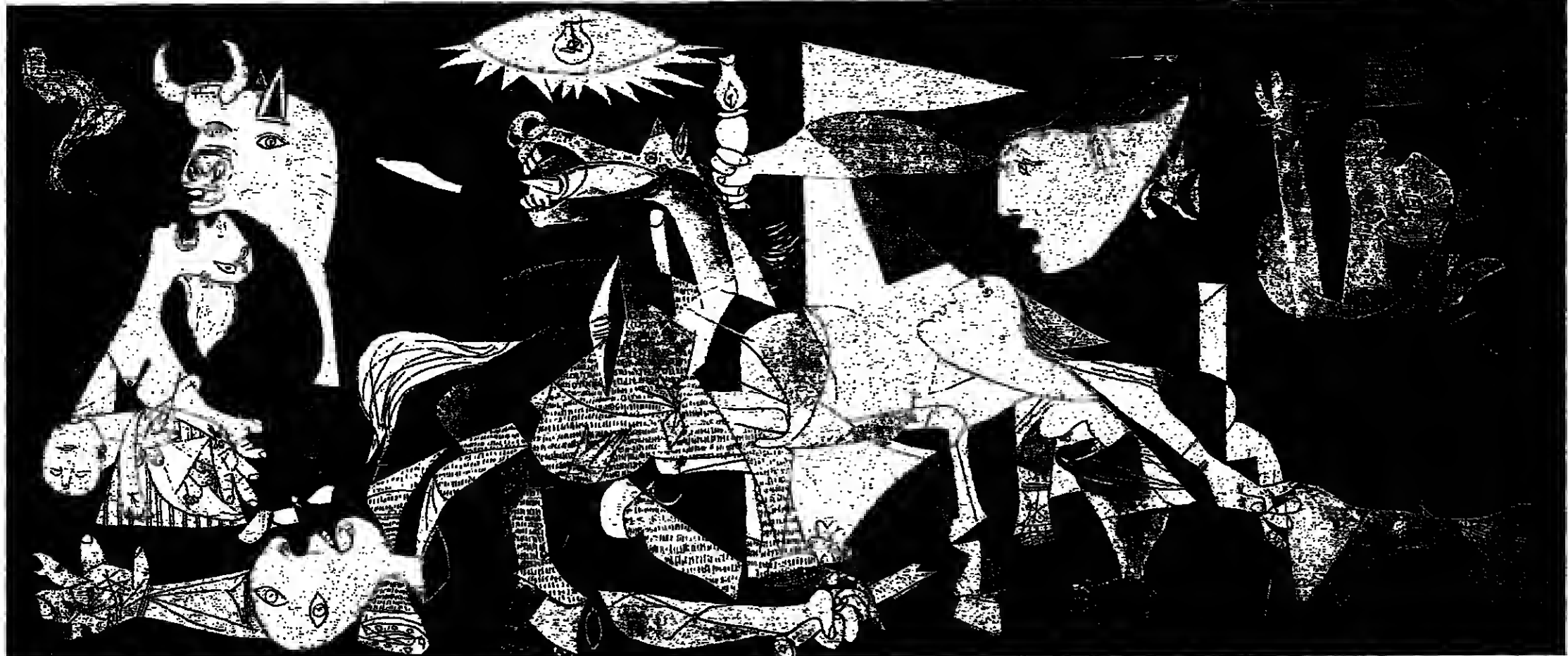
A ride on the 20th-Century Limited

One hundred years in how many pages? asks Felipe Fernández-Armesto

Histories of the 20th century are like buses: you wait almost a hundred years for one and then they all come along at once. For a fast route and a top-deck view, you can take *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* or you can travel with Martin Gilbert, who halts at every stop and never gets out of slow gear; or you can board the Clapham omnibus with Hunter Davies and hear the passengers chat.

Whichever you choose, the ride is bound to be bumpy. Paradox is our century's only consistency. Progress has never been faster, or more widely repudiated. Knowledge has grown: so, even more, has nonsense. Peace has never been so valued, nor war so destructive. Technology, which is intended to be liberating, becomes tyrannous or trivial. Science and secularism lead to a resurgence of religions. Prosperity has never been so easy and happiness has rarely seemed so elusive. Good-life romantics, New Age freaks, Post-Modernist thinkers and the practitioners of mass culture all crave escape from modern life. It has been a globalising century. We can conceive "one world", create world-spanning agencies, form breathtakingly big alliances. Meanwhile, historic hatreds have been recovered, superstates smashed. Worldwide cracks gape between east and west, north and south, Islam and the rest. For Westerners, globalisation means a world re-moulded in their own image; yet Western supremacy has been unravelled and the West is being counter-colonised by its former victims.

We have simultaneously the oldest and youngest populations in history. We also probably have, relatively speaking, the richest and poorest. We have never had so much power



Pablo Picasso painted *Guernica* in 1937 in response to the German bombing of the town during the Spanish Civil War: the attack was a bloody forerunner of the uses of technology during the Second World War

over nature, or felt so vulnerable to nature's revenge. We no longer fear a divine or man-made apocalypse but fret over climatic change, environmental exhaustion, asteroid bombardment and the coming plague.

Individual freedom and social solidarity have never been so highly valued or so hard to reconcile. The century of individual liberation has also been the century of over-planning. Human rights are loudly celebrated and ruthlessly suppressed: lives officiously prolonged and wantonly destroyed. The communist nirvana made people unhappy; social democratic utopias turned them suicidal. Now, where people are freest they wear the dreary uniforms of dress-down Fridays and sneaker-chic. Societies of democratic values and universal welfare seem doomed to self-subversion. Between the rocks, theorists

dive for a "middle way" and drown.

Can the history of such a disparate century be packed into a book? Martin Gilbert can scarcely contain it inside the three volumes he has planned. In *The History of the 20th Century, Vol. 2, 1933-66* (HarperCollins, £29.99; ISBN 0 00 215869 8) he arranges the material chronicle-style, year by year: the result is unrelentingly formulaic, despite wonderfully fluent prose and vividly selected evidence. The new volume is more coherent than the first, because the story of the Second World War dominates the rest. Cultural and intellectual history are still neglected. Yet Gilbert's technique grips the reader with a terrible power: like the annals ascribed to Confucius, his history is a catalogue of follies and evils which grow in horror as they are starkly told and tolled.

Hunter Davies, in *Born 1900* (Little, Brown, £16.99; ISBN 0 316 64471 4) has a similar deadpan routine but uses it for a feelgood effect. To enjoy his collection of friendly sketches of people and institutions born in 1900, you have, like me, to love the author's quirks: his delight in the mildly amusing, the small-scale and self-effacing, his indifference to anything striking or symbolic, portentous or profound. His "defining moments of the 1960s" are England's World Cup soccer victory and "the day the Beatles recorded *Sgt Pepper*". On Freud's couch, he admires the pretty cushions. His claim that the hamburger was invented in 1900 leads — along his mazy road — to "the cleanest lavatories in Hampstead". His interviewees burble unchallenged and maudlin engagingly. "But, looking back now, it's history, isn't it? Oh, aye. Funny, really."

The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century (Edited by Michael Howard and William Roger Louis, OUP, £25; ISBN 0 19 280426 0) makes other denizens of the depot look like slowcoaches. It covers all routes in just over 300 pages. The editors, of both irresistible persuasiveness and prestige, have secured, in most cases, the best-qualified contributors in the world. Some of these authors have captured lifetimes of work in only a few lines. Readers of William McNeill on demography, Robert Skidelsky on the economy or Adam Roberts on international law, will be inspired as well as informed. Most of the regional and chronological chapters are composed by masters of summation.

There is no theme, except a commitment to the disinterested description of the process of change, faintly coloured by cautious optimism. Some essays opt for sporadic objectivity; others pursue enlightening agendas. Alan Ryan could hardly do justice to "Global Culture" — so substitutes a wry essay on the follies of Modernism. Steven Weinberg's chapter is impressive more for its vindication of the reality of knowledge than for its coverage of physics. This is a small book but a big achievement: a model of ambition without pretension, of compression without compromises.

The husbands in Anthony Giardina's short stories, *The Country of Marriage* (Flamingo, £11.99; ISBN 0 00 225792 0) are an interesting lot. White, suburban Americans, they are aware of their ordinariness and of their vast distance from new thoughts or experience. As one of them says: "There's a raw world and there's a tame one, and I believe you make the choice early as to which you're going to live in."

Their lives are the achievement of a dream which ignores the world elsewhere. If they wake to the fact that a marriage has grown cold, they avoid confrontation, quietly drawing their schemes to fit the circumstances. Communication comes through silence. A fireman's desire for another child is sustained despite his partner's signs to the contrary; a wife's affair is played down by a husband for whom his baby is everything and "the presence of a woman is not enough to convince us we're not alone".

These stories vibrate with all the angst of Cheever and Updike, but there is no sign of the go-getting urgency of their American males. Instead, Giardina has cornered a less well

Dream countries

Aisling Foster reviews three collections of short stories

known species, and in the sprawl of ribbon development he has opened territory which is completely his own. In *Hunger* (Phoenix House, £15.99; ISBN 1 861 59071 7) Ian Samanatha Chang's stories offer a different take on the American dream. These are tales of Chinese immigrants who, sacrificed everything to come to the United States and have raised their children within the vacuum of two cultures. In the title novella, the wife of a talented violinist watches helplessly as her husband falls in his career before focusing his ambition upon his two daughters. The result is predictable, but the spare beauty of the writing turns the disappointments of family life into a deeply disturbing fairy tale.

Communication gaps yawn open. The parents miss the subtlety with which they can express themselves in Mandarin, and lose contact with their

children. What is missing is the other homeland inside every immigrant's head. Without describing it, even interesting characters remain as incomplete as the faded statistics in an Ellis Island register.

Far from American self-analysis, the males who populate Alan Wall's collection, *Richard Dadd in Bedlam & other Stories* (Secker, £8; Warburg, £9.99; ISBN 0 436 22080 6) epitomise the gruff, private qualities of some land which is forever Yorkshire. The detective in the first story lives in the West Riding. Aged 51, he is semi-retired and finds a slant in London too much for his aged frame to bear.

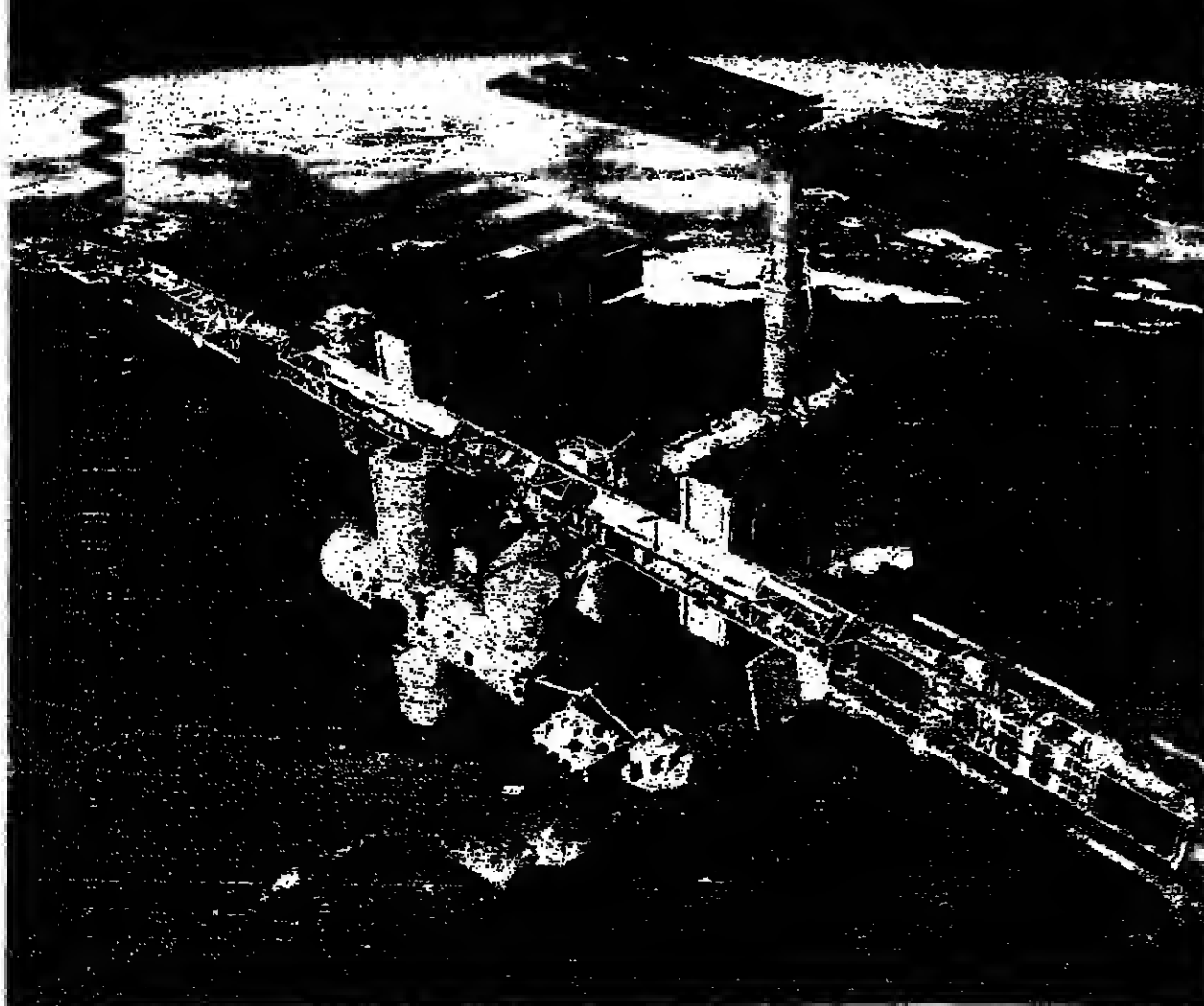
He's a bit of a good, sticky, though, not unlike a television script for *A Touch of Frost*. The use of different voices is impressive elsewhere; but there are similarities in character. Whether a press photographer, a pig breeder in Roman Galilee or Rembrandt on his death bed, these men are loners, the thoughtful, self-sufficient types who know their Bible and see women as angels or whores. Apart from Bradford, their world seems more limited and a great deal nastier than any betwixt suburb or emigrant Chinatown.

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Blind to the eye of the East

ANDREW ROBINSON

By Roberto Calasso
Jonathan Cape, £18.99
ISBN 0 224 05052 4



The modern retelling of ancient tales generally makes for a spurious kind of literature. It's no good unless the stories can be made first-hand again, dragged up out of the artist's own invention again, and that hasn't often happened outside poetry. But it's happened here. These are the best retellings of Indian tales that I've read, and I've read some hundreds.

Thus Ted Hughes on that master storyteller R. K. Narayan's retelling of Indian myths and scriptures, which are almost as lively and full of humanity as Narayan's novels. Roberto Calasso's mining of similar sources, *Ka*, translated from the Italian by Tim Parks, has, unfortunately, none of Narayan's qualities. It is an attempt to do for India what Calasso successfully did for Western classical myths in *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. But where the earlier book was wise and witty and wore its learning lightly, *Ka* is portentous, humourless and freighted with dubious philosophy.

The blurb claims that Calasso "doesn't explain or describe" the mental world of ancient India — "he regenerates it through its epic cyclical stories and customs, until we no longer need to define it for ourselves because we have come to know what it is." This is not so. For much of the book, storytelling is abandoned for disquisition on the meaning of the stories — unlike the earlier book, in which the stories had priority over the author's inter-

pretations. When, rarely, a story is given room to breathe, Calasso's obvious narrative talents flash to the fore.

His task is made more difficult by his decision to concentrate on the early works of Indian literature, the *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Brahmanas*; the later *Mahabharata* is treated in a highly compressed manner, with its celebrated *Bhagavad Gita* barely mentioned. Kalidasa, the greatest of the Sanskrit writers, makes only a guest appearance; and the *Ramayana* is totally omitted. Perhaps Calasso wanted to avoid traversing the same ground as Peter Brook. But the effect is to deprive the reader of most of the really interesting psychological drama in ancient Indian literature in favour of abstract thought and bizarre miracles.

In 20th-century India, it is



The Hindu god Ganesha: Ka uses Westernised images

the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* that remain a living presence, while the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* are chiefly the province of scholars and the tedious *Brahmanas* have been consigned to the same fate as that of the obscure parts of the Old Testament. Calasso seems determined to fly in the face of this reality.

Like dozens of Western scholars past and present — some of whom he quotes — he is deeply drawn to the idea of India as a land of meditating sages without interest in the physical world and the earthly existence of human beings. Not only does this view make for dull reading in a book of stories, it is also a serious oversimplification of the Indian reality. From ancient times to the

present day, Indian artists have vividly depicted the concrete details of their surroundings and the gamut of emotions in the here and now.

Calasso's choice of illustrations of Indian gods and goddesses reveals his bias even better than his words. Except for the book's jacket, there is not a single Indian-made image in the book — despite its dealing with a civilisation having one of the richest traditions of iconography.

Rabindranath Tagore once said of a Western translation of the *Upanishads* that "some parts are incomprehensible owing to the symbolic language used which has utterly lost its significance... there are no means whatever today for realising their spirit." *Ka* has, yet again, proved the truth of this perception.

مکتبہ اعلیٰ

Bargains of the week: from special offers on short breaks in trendy Dublin to diving courses in the Red Sea

PACK YOUR BAGS



A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices

BRIEFING

DESPERATE to fill their properties in the dog days of January, Britain's hoteliers are offering a host of special deals, which is good news for those who failed to escape over Christmas or New Year or were so exhausted by the festivities that they need another break, Tony Dawe writes.

The Arcadian Hotels group is leading the way with bed and breakfast in its country house hotels in Cheshire, Kent, Warwickshire and Yorkshire costing a couple £99 a night, provided they stay a minimum of two nights.

Guests at Wood Hall in the Yorkshire countryside can join in activities guided by the gamekeeper, including hawking, badger-watching and fishing. Visitors to the "Molly B" near Chester, which has a special dinner, B&B rate for short breaks, will even find a Cheshire cheese and port awaiting them. Details: 0800-174125.

CONSORT Hotels is offering weekend breaks at its Castle Green Hotel in Kendal in the Lake District for £99 for a couple, including full breakfast and use of the leisure facilities. The offer is available on January 29 and 30 and February 19 and 20, with a one-night

stay on offer at half the price. Details: 01539 734000.

MAYFAIR for two nights costs rather more, but the £350 package offered by The Chesterfield includes breakfast and accommodation for two in a room with king-size bed and a £25 voucher to top shops. Presumably that most January visitors head for the sales, the hotel offers a free foot massage and drink every evening. Details: 0171-491 2622.

FREE BEER and a bag of horse manure are among the extras included in Wiltshire weekend breaks centred on the 125-year-old Wadworth brewery in Devizes. A tour, drayman's lunch and the chance to muck out and exercise the brewery's shire horses all form part of the break, which costs £140 for two nights' dinner, B&B at the Black Swan, plus all those extras. Details: 01380 723259.

DUBLIN will become even more popular for short breaks this year as special offers come into force. Stay on Friday and Saturday at the Camden Court Hotel and Sunday will be free with Irish Ferries Holidays, which is offering the B&B package plus return ferry travel with car for £133. The price is based on four travelling and is sadly unavailable when Ireland's rugby team is playing at Lansdowne Road. Details: 0990 170000.

CAMPUS Travel is joining the air fares war to the Irish capital with return flights from Stansted available for students and under-26s for £54, plus tax, and from Heathrow for £61. The offer is valid for departures until the end of March, returning within a year. Details: 0171-730 3402.



Country life: join the gamekeeper on a Yorkshire break



St Nicholas Church in Prague: four nights in a central three-star hotel are available for £249, including flights

CRUISING is good value in the first two months of the year and several lines are offering deals that work out at less than £60 a day for everything including flights. Eleven days' sailing through the Mediterranean and down to Madeira, the Canary Islands and Morocco from January 30 costs £638 with Festival Cruises. The trip starts with a flight from Gatwick to Genoa and is also available for February 10 and 21 departures at £44 more. Details: 0171-436 0827.

A FORTNIGHT'S cruise to similar destinations is on offer for £695 from Fred Olsen Cruise Lines, but this trip is all at sea. Sail from Dover on Black Prince on January 22 and call at Madeira, Lanzarote, Agadir and Lisbon. Details: 01473 292222.

SKIING may be the most popular holiday pastime in Eu-

rope at this time of year, but it is available at bargain prices. Lunn Poly offers a week in a basic hotel in the French Pyrenees for £159, based on four people sharing. The Thomson holiday starts with a flight from Gatwick on January 16. Details from Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

CLAVIERE, an Italian ski resort with a grand 1920s hotel, is on offer from Crystal Ski, especially for those who can fly from Newcastle on January 24. For them, a week's half-board will cost £299, a £125 saving. The same hotel and destination is available from other airports for £395. Details: 0181-399 5144.

NICE is as trendy as ever at this time of year, although there may be fewer beauties on the beach. Eurotours is launching six-day trips to the Riviera from January 19, based on train travel. The package costs from £259 and includes Eurostar seats from

London to Lille, TGV to Nice and five nights' B&B. Details: 0181-289 8889.

PARIS is also available at a special price - if you can travel on Monday. A four-night Airstars break, including return flights from Manchester and B&B, costs only £109 with Co-op Travelcare. Details: 0541 500388.

SAVINGS on breaks to the "winter wonderland" city of Prague are available for the next three months from Travelers Czech. Four nights in a central three-star hotel now cost £249, including return scheduled flights from Heathrow, and can be enjoyed at weekends, as well as mid-week. Details: 01959 540700.

WINTER sun holidays are also available at good prices with First Choice. A fortnight's self-catering in Paphos, Cyprus, costs £189, including a flight from Luton next Wednesday. Details: 0870 750 0100.

VALENTINE'S DAY is the next special date in many diaries and the offers are already pouring in - for holiday deals, at least. A champagne weekend might be an appropriate way of celebrating and Arblastor & Clarke Wine Tours is proposing two nights in Rheims on February 13 and 14, with tours and tastings at champagne houses and several splendid meals. The cost of £249 includes coach travel. Details: 01730 893344.

FOR something completely different, Wildlife Worldwide suggests spending Valentine's Day, and the evening of the full moon two days later, tracking the wolf population of the Bieszczady Mountains. The offer forms part of a nine-day natural history tour of Poland, including the chance to see bison, brown bears and eagles. The trip starts with a flight from Heathrow on February 12 and costs £395 with accommodation, meals and a guide. Details: 0181-667 9158.

ASTONY BLAIR and his family return from the Seychelles. Elite Vacations is offering an excellent deal to an area which they did not visit. Not surprising really, because it's called Fairland. The name belongs to a stretch of coast on Mahé, which boasts a small beach-side hotel where a five-night stay costs £698 and 12 nights £929, including return scheduled flights.

For those on a prime minister's salary, the secluded Hotel L'Archipel on Praslin is available from £1,019 for five nights with flights, and £1,658 for 12 nights. Details: 0181-864 4431.

ACROSS the Indian Ocean in Goa, Direct Line Holidays is offering a fortnight's B&B at the new Prazeres Resort Hotel at Candolim for £399. The deal is available with a flight from Gatwick on January 23. Details: 0181-239 8000.

SOUTH AFRICA for £199 return must be the cheapest deal yet and is available from Bridge The World for an Air Namibia flight from Heathrow to Johannesburg or Cape Town on February 2. Details: 0171-911 0900.

DIVING courses are available in conjunction with trips to Red Sea resorts with Regal Holidays and will hardly seem an extravagance because the basic price for a week's B&B and return flights from Gatwick this month is £189. Courses cost from £160 to £230 for a fast-track programme. Details: 01353 778096.

THE BUSY of Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, combined with a peaceful beach holiday on Pangkor Island, Malaysia, is the unusual package offered by Magic of the Orient. Fly from Heathrow to Hong Kong for five nights in a central hotel, then to the Malaysian capital for a couple of nights, before continuing to the Pan Pacific Resort for five more nights with half-board. The package is available until March 21 for £988. Details: 01293 537700.

MARGARITA is more than a drink: it's an island in the southern Caribbean where a fortnight's all-inclusive holiday is on offer for £589 from Eclipse, with flights from Gatwick or Manchester on January 27. Details: 0990 010203.

COLORADO might seem a long way to go for a week's skiing but Breckenridge is a popu-

lar resort with Britons, offering a lively nightlife and extensive runs. It is available for a relatively modest £689 from Ski Independence. The deal includes a return flight from Heathrow and chalet accommodation with breakfast, afternoon tea and dinner with wine. Details: 0990 530553.

SAN DIEGO could be ideal in January, with temperatures in the high sixties rather than the scorching levels of the summer. Thomas Cook Holidays is offering a week in the city for £479, children aged two to 11 can go for £230. The deal includes return flights from Gatwick, car hire and accommodation at the Dana Inn, which is the closest hotel to Sea World and is well-positioned for other attractions. Details: 01733 418100.

SYDNEY and its beaches can be enjoyed for three days before setting sail for the Whit-



Ever popular Bondi Beach

sunday Islands, the Great Barrier Reef, Bali, Java and finally Singapore on an Australian Adventure offered by Orient Lines. The trip starts with a flight from London on March 9 and costs from £2,250. A Highlights of New Zealand cruise, after a flight from London on February 25, is available from the same company from £1,750. Details: 0171-409 2500.

All prices based on two travelling together and sharing a room unless otherwise stated.



See The Times on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays

EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

SWISS SKI HOLIDAY

SEVEN NIGHTS FROM JUST £516

FREE six-day ski-lift pass
FREE ski and boot rental

Today The Times, with the Switzerland Travel Centre, offers readers an unbeatable value ski holiday with a FREE six-day ski-lift pass and FREE ski and boot rental. Meiringen Hasliberg, in the Bernese Oberland region, is a picturesque resort visited mainly by Swiss skiers.

Located in the heart of the Hasli valley, the top of the ski area is 2,433m. The resort offers 60km of groomed pistes with a variety of runs for all standards of skiers, an excellent cable car and lift system, including a new fast gondola which opens this winter, extensive snow-making facilities and a good selection of bars and restaurants.

SKI FACTS Number of downhill runs 25. Beginners 33%; intermediate 55%; advanced 12%.

RESORT ACTIVITIES Ski and snowboard schools, cross country (35km), winter walking trails (35km), ice-skating, plus indoor swimming pool and fitness centre which Times readers will have a free pass for.

ACCOMMODATION You will spend seven nights at the centrally-located four-star Parkhotel du Sauvage on a half-board basis. This grand hotel, originally dating from 1880, is set in its own grounds against a beautiful mountain backdrop. Recently refurbished, it is a friendly establishment with various welcoming public areas for guests, and a play area for children. It offers an extensive buffet breakfast and four-course dinner every evening.



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Parkhotel du Sauvage: this centrally-located four-star hotel originally dates from 1880

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CHANGING TIMES

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Richard Evans on a former teacher relishing the challenge of handicapping

Smith plays the weighting game

On his 21st birthday, Philip Smith and some fellow students from Southampton University decided to celebrate by attending the Derby at Epsom. It proved to be the defining day of his life—in more ways than one.

Not only did one of the friends on that glorious June afternoon later become Mrs. Smith, but on his first visit to a racecourse the young history and economics student fell in love with racing as Nijinsky surged to victory under Lester Piggott.

The very next day, he pursued a belief, borne out of his studies, that there had to be some mathematical process for evaluating the performance of horses and bought a copy of *Racehorses Of 1960*, the Timeform annual containing ratings for every horse in training. Thus began a passion for handicapping.

For a quarter of a century, while he taught PE, then histo-



Smith has recently been appointed to take over from Christopher Mordaunt as senior National Hunt handicapper by the BHB

ry and economics and, finally, maths, he developed the skill during evenings and weekends. After concentrating initially on two-year-olds, he then rated group and listed horses and wrote a book on the subject, which caught the eye of Geoffrey Gibbs, then senior Jockey Club handicapper.

"I had thought for a number of years how wonderful it would be to be one of those mysterious BHB handicappers, never dreaming that it could become a possibility." However, in 1995 a vacancy arose: Smith again caught the eye of Gibbs and suddenly the teacher, who had supplemented his income most years with some shrewd wagers, was poacher-turned-gamekeeper as he became one of those mysterious men at Forman Square.

After starting off rating sta-

tioners on the Flat, he progressed to sprinters before taking over at the start of this month from Christopher Mordaunt as the senior National Hunt handicapper. His is an onerous task, according to a rating and therefore a handicapper, ranging from those who run in the lowest races at the poor tracks, to the elite horses who will line up at Aintree for the Grand National in April.

Make a mistake—or even a perceived error, such as letting a horse in too lightly or penning it too harshly—and the wrath of trainers, owners and punters will descend upon his head. Smith appears to relish the challenge.

"What we are trying to do is to set everyone a puzzle and to make that puzzle as difficult as possible. We don't want racing tipsters or punters finding a

handicap easy to solve. We want people to put time and effort into it—as we do."

At the heart of a handicapper's philosophy is the desire to frame handicaps so that all the runners have an equal chance and finish in a dead heat. Impossible, of course, but handicappers are still the toughest nuts to crack because of their very nature—yet punters relish the challenge of the likes of the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, the Ayr Gold Cup or the Royal Hunt Cup.

"Of course, the key handicappers because they want to pit their wits against mine. That is my job satisfaction. I want to set a problem that they will find difficult to solve."

Smith continued: "Take the Ayr Gold Cup, for example, which is an early-closing race. If the job is done properly, you

get open betting and in the week leading up to the race last year they were betting 14-1 the field. I look that as a huge compliment. If there had been a 3-1 favourite I would have felt I had not done my job properly because the perception of punters would have been that something had been let in lightly. Similarly, I would not want to see any 66-1 shots because that would imply they had got no chance."

In recent years, there has been a perception that chasing handicaps have been easier to crack than most, because winners have not been harshly penalised, which has resulted in an overall "slippage" in the ratings of chasers. Smith thinks such criticism is unfair—he believes the 10lb difference between the

median rating of hurdlers and chasers is more to blame—nevertheless, his style of handicapping chasers is likely to result in harsher treatment to winners.

"About three years ago, Matthew Tester [the two-year-old handicapper] carried out some research which showed that while a horse in a handicap had an 8 per cent chance of winning, a horse who won a handicap had a 16 per cent chance of winning a handicap next time. That figure alarmed me and prompted me to adopt a slightly more rigorous approach to winners of races. Philosophically, I became slightly harder on winners and all I am bringing that philosophy to jumping."

A quick glance at his assessment of last weekend's winners backs up the point.

Fourth In Line, who won at Newbury for Venetia Williams, has gone up 13lb. "I am not trying to stop winners winning again, but I want the owners and trainers of horses behind Fourth In Line to think that they can beat him if they try again. That is the principle I will work to all the time. I want owners and trainers to feel when they run in one of my handicaps they have a chance of winning."

So, what is his tip to punters? "Don't bet in handicaps," he says, in all seriousness, "unless you are prepared to put in the time. On average, it takes me an hour to evaluate a handicap, so I would back my experience against someone who looks at a race for just a few minutes."

Don't say you have not been warned.

THUNDERER

12.50 Ultra Best, 1.20 Dando Times, 1.50 The Green Grey, 2.25 Alford, 2.55 Glastonbury, 3.25 Noulark, 3.55 Prospectors Cove.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW BEST SIS

12.50 RED GAUNTLET SELLING STAKES

(£2,019; 70) (16 runners)

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11-12 Kystel Mac, 4-5 Alford, 6-1 Sound The Trumpet, Dando Times.

11-14 The Green Grey, 1-1 Alford, 2-1 Sound The Trumpet, Dando Times.

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Maguire to ride French Holly

ADRIAN MAGUIRE has been booked to partner French Holly

THE BEST SPORTING YEAR OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Matthews or DiMaggio?

Here's a game that anyone can play — and everyone can win. It started this week across the Atlantic where that champion American magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, posed the question: "What's the best sports year ever?"

"We hold this truth to be self-evident," the magazine proclaimed, "that all sports years are not created equal ... and, in fact, most years really aren't particularly special."

Sports Illustrated nominates its top dozen years of the 20th century, but, as you might fear, their choices have a distinctly American flavour and only those with a working knowledge of sport in the United States are going to be up to deciphering the citations.

Typical, for instance, is 1941 which comes in at No 6 on their list. Here are their reasons for picking it:

"DiMaggio's 56 straight; that last 400 by Ted Williams; Louis knocks out Conn in 13th; Whirlaway wins Triple Crown as Arcaro wins his first of two; Craig Wood is first to win Masters and US Open in same year."

Those of us who live closer to Euroland and whose favourite sporting moments are rooted in Britain will have very different reasons for picking the moments to remember. So here is a top ten of the great sporting years of the century looked at through less transatlantic eyes.

There is plenty of choice — from the innocent days of the Edwardians to the highly professionalised showbusiness

spectaculars that close the century.

A year as early as 1903 gets on the shortlist because of the vision of a former cyclist and desperate newspaper editor, Henri Desgranges, who dreamt up the idea of a month-long Tour de France cycle race with £20,000 in prize-money.

Even then there were recognisably modern problems, for it was in that year that the Jockey Club banned doping after two owners and one trainer had won £2 million over five seasons by betting on drugged horses.



Among the years fighting for the title, who could leave out 1953 — set alight by the magic of Stanley Matthews, at the age of 38, coaxing Blackpool to a 4-3 victory over Bolton Wanderers before a crowd of 100,000 in the FA Cup Final? A few months later, in 1954, a 24-year-old Oxford student, Roger Bannister, made that year one of the greats by running the mile in 3min 59.4sec at Iffley Road.

Nor could anyone leave out 1966 with England's World Cup victory over West

Germany, while competing hard for the title must be 1977 with Red Rum romping to his third Grand National and Virginia Wade taking the ladies' title at the centenary Wimbledon. John McEnroe made his first appearance at the championships, and Liverpool, already the League champions, beat Borussia Mönchengladbach for the European Cup.

But the winning year, the one no sports lover can ever forget, must be 1981. Ian Botham, looking every inch the Boys' Own hero, seemed to retain the Ashes virtually on his own. As a cricketer and as a character, with his fishing, drinking, gambling, bating and bowling, he mesmerised his adoring public. While he was achieving the impossible, Seb Coe and Steve Ovett swapped

the world mile record three times in a nine-day purple patch. By the time they had finished, Coe had the record back with 3min 47.33sec. For thousands more, 1981 will be remembered for the first of Chris Brasher's London Marathons.

Sports Illustrated nominates as its greatest year we have just left behind — 1998. It is one that might have been on my shortlist, too. But a young man called Beckham put the boot into that. So 1981 is the winner, though as far as the century goes there is still 1999. Who knows, that might yet top all the lists? For as every sportsman knows — or at least dreams — the best season of all is always the one still to come.

JOHN BRYANT

1981

Botham wins Ashes
Sherriff strolls the Derby
Coe-Ovett swap mile record 3 times in 9 days

Torvill & Dean get perfect 6s in British championships
McEnroe beats Borg at Wimbledon
First London Marathon (7,700 starters)
Bob Champion (cancer victim) wins Grand National on Aldaniti



1

1924

Harold Abrahams & Eric Liddell win gold in Chariots of Fire Olympics
Paavo Nurmi gets five gold medals
Johnny "Tarzan" Weissmuller swims to three golds
First Winter Olympics in Chamonix
Beginning of Hobbs and Sutcliffe opening partnership for England



4

1966

Ali Ramsey's England win World Cup
Jonah Barrington becomes World No 1 at squash
Jack Brabham wins world motor racing championship in the car he built
Golfer Jack Nicklaus wins the Open



5

1948

Fanny Blankers-Koen runs and jumps to world records in 100m, 80m hurdles, high jump and long jump at London Olympic Games
Emil Zatopek wins his first Olympic gold
Don Bradman ends his Test career at the Oval with a Test average of 99.94



6

1903

Tour de France launched as publicity stunt by sport paper *L'Auto* (renamed *L'Equipe* at the end of World War II)
Comishman Bob Fitzsimmons wins world light-heavyweight title in San Francisco
Jockey Club bans doping



7

1936

Black American athletes, led by Jesse Owens, take seven gold, three silver and three bronze medals at the 1936 "Nazi" Olympics
Boxer Joe Louis knocked out by Max Schmeling in Yankee Stadium
Britain's first televised football match — Arsenal v Everton



8

1908

Marathon runner Dorandé Pietri carried over the line and disqualified in London Olympic Games
Britain wins 56 gold medals at Games
Jack Hobbs scores 83 on his Test debut in Melbourne
Dr W. G. Grace ends first-class career at 59
Manchester United win their first League title



9

1954

Roger Bannister breaks four-minute mile at Oxford
Lester Piggott wins his first Derby on Never Say Die
Chris Chataway beats Russian Vladimir Kuts under White City floodlights



10

1977

Red Rum wins third Grand National
John McEnroe hits Wimbledon for first time
Liverpool league champions; European Cup winners; FA Cup finalists
Virginia Wade wins centenary Wimbledon
Geoff Boycott returns to help win the Ashes



2

1953

Hillary & Tensing conquer Everest
England capture the Ashes
Sir Gordon Richards at 49, wins his first Derby
Stanley Matthews, 38, wins FA Cup Final medal



3

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED'S BEST YEARS

- 1 1998 McGwire and Sosa set baseball home-run records, Elway wins Super Bowl at last, France wins World Cup
- 2 1919 Dempsey wins heavyweight title, Chicago "Black Sox" baseball scandal, Lenglen wins first Wimbledon
- 3 1973 Miami Dolphins have perfect NFL season, George Foreman wins heavyweight title
- 4 1975 Muhammad Ali beats Foreman in Manila, Ashe wins Wimbledon
- 5 1953 Everest conquered, Hogan wins three golfing majors
- 6 1941 DiMaggio's baseball hitting streak, Whirlaway wins US racing's Triple Crown
- 7 1908 US wins half the track golds at London Olympics; Jack Johnson wins heavyweight title
- 8 1930 Bobby Jones achieves golf's only grand slam
- 9 1966 various US sporting achievements but no mention of World Cup
- 10 1958 Palmer wins Masters, Sugar Ray Robinson wins sixth title, Pelé
- 11 1924 Nurmi wins five Olympic golds; Tilden takes fifth US Open
- 12 1969 NY Jets are surprise winners of Super Bowl; New York "Miracle" Mets win baseball World Series
- Honourable mentions: 1982, 1927

SAILING

British bid to secure funding for Olympics

By Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent

BRITAIN'S Olympic hopefuls face their first big test in the build-up to the Sydney Games in 2000 starting today, as seven of the nine Olympic classes hold concurrent world championships at the Worlds 99 regatta in Melbourne.

The event, one of the biggest world-class dinghy and keelboat regattas staged with a total of 16 classes holding world championships, is being treated by Royal Yachting Association coaches as a significant yardstick on the road to Sydney. Britain has more than 60 sailors taking part.

Good performances in Melbourne are essential for all-important funding in the run-up to the national Olympic trials a year from now. A top-ten finish will be required to qualify for "elite" Sports Council funding, while any-

Clipper details 49

where in the top 20 guarantees "international" class funding, which is about a third as much. Among Britain's top contenders are Ben Ainslie, in Lasers, who is seeking to add a world championship to his European title in August and his victory at the ISAF world sailing championships last March.

Melbourne will feature the start of a battle between five British pairings in the new 49er, two-man skiff. Ian Barker, the national champion, will sail with Daniel Phillips while Paul Brotherton and Neal McDonald, the European champions, will also be competing. Andy and Ian Brien, who were runners-up at the last world championships, will be in action, along with the combination of Tim Robinson and Ian Walker, and Ado Stead and Zeb Elliot.

Of the five, Robinson and Walker perhaps are under the biggest pressure to produce a top-three finish. Whatever the outcome, pairings may be shuffled in the class after this regatta.

In Solings, Andy Beardsworth, of Britain, sailing with Barry Parkin and Richard Sydenham, will be looking to put in another strong performance after his win in this class at the Sydney International regatta last month. Among the opposition will be Lawrie Smith, who has teamed up with his 1992 Olympic bronze medal-winning crew, Ossie Stewart and Rob Cruickshank.

Another solid display will be expected from Iain Percy in Fins. He is one of the leading sailors in this class after his third place at the European championships and a seventh at the last world championships. Shirley Robertson returns in the Europe class and will be looking to go one better than her second place at the last world championships.

In the Around Alone Race, Mike Garside, of Britain, who started the second leg well, has seen his race go from bad to worse. Crossing the Tasman Sea, he lost out heavily to the Class 2 leader, J. P. Mouligneau on *Cray Valley*, who reached Auckland on Saturday. To compound matters he is now losing even more miles to Brad van Liew, of the United States, who has brought *Balante* Bar alongside Garside's *Magellan Alpha*, having earlier been more than 400 miles adrift.

Yesterday the Briton still had more than 600 miles to go, but was travelling at a speed of just one knot. At Cape Town, in South Africa, he was only a day behind Mouligneau, but yesterday he was estimating the gap could be as much as 12 days by the time he finally reaches Auckland.

Brentnall takes up family business

Derby County and Derbyshire employ an unusual double act

When Derby County Football Club kicked into life in 1884 as an offshoot of the neighbouring Derbyshire County Cricket Club, none of the founder members could have imagined that, a century later, seasons without boundaries and full-blown professionalism would make playing links impossible. Now, however, an unusual family partnership is providing a common bond.

Ann Brentnall has been the physiotherapist at the county cricket club for 12 years. This weekend, in recognition of her growing stature, she leaves with the England A squad for an eight-week tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa. Helen Brentnall, her daughter, 21, has been a masseuse at Derby County FC for three seasons.

"After I'd done a fitness and sports therapy course in Bath, I came back to Derby to work in a gym, taking aerobics classes and circuit training," Helen Brentnall said. "Then Mum asked me to do some work on the cricketers, using my massage skills, because the physios there were snowed under. Derby County were in the same situation and telephoned the cricket club to ask for help. I started at the Baseball Ground in 1996 and was made full-time at the beginning of this season."

Entering such a cloistered male environment did not intimidate her. "Mum used to take me, my brother and sister to the cricket, where we'd sit and play cards in the dressing-rooms," she said. "All the players would be milling around, so we grew up around professional men's sport. I've never experienced any discrimination and Derby wouldn't have hired me if they had doubted that a woman could work here. When I started, I never thought 'Oh, God, look at all these footballers'. It just seemed normal."

After Jim Smith, the Derby manager, insisted this season that she should be included in the official team photographs, Brentnall might have to get used to some inquisitive questioning from eagle-eyed supporters. "All my friends know what I do," she said, "but if

SARAH POTTER



someone came up to me in the pub, I wouldn't tell them because the usual response is 'How much is it for extras?' Yet there is nothing shady about being a sports masseuse. "There's a big demand for it now," Brentnall said. "Injury prevention has become very important in football. I work alongside Peter Melville and Neil Sillit, the physios, and Dane Farrell, the fitness coach. The players all had body tests at the start of the season to identify their weak spots and it's my job to work on those. Obviously, we have all the high-tech new machinery, but massage has its place, too. You can prevent a lot of injuries by keeping muscles elastic."

You can prevent a lot of injuries

In which case, the enigmatic Paulo Wanchope, the Costa Rica striker, who has legs as supple as rubber bands, is the running, jumping advert for her work. "The players have told me I'm not allowed to talk about them," Brentnall said, "but, yes, Wanchope's legs are very long and he's quite brilliant. The fans get frustrated sometimes, but everyone is glad he came over to play for us. There are a couple of real jokers in the team, but there isn't one of them who won't have a laugh."

The level of banter bouncing around at the training ground is no mean achievement, given that cosmopolitan Derby can also field two Spaniards, two Italians, an Argentinian, an Estonian, a Dane, a Norwegian and a Ger-



Helen Brentnall holds the fortunes of Derby County's footballers in her hands

man. "It doesn't make any difference to me," Brentnall said, "because they all speak good English. Jim Smith involves everybody and always makes training interesting. He's one of the greats in the game. It's not so easy for the cook, though, because she has to try and cater for everybody."

According to Brentnall, every job at the club is easy if the team is winning. "Premiership football is very intense and the pressure comes from everywhere," she said. "The

press hammer you, even if you have a couple of bad games, and then everybody feels low. Fortunately, I've never seen it where we're really struggling and this season the fans seem happy that we have made a steady start. Derby are also in the fourth round of the FA Cup."

Those supporters were not universally cheerful when the club moved its goalposts to a new, purpose-built stadium in 1997. Some of the players also had concerns.

"A lot were worried that the atmosphere wouldn't be as good because the Baseball Ground was so compact," Brentnall said, "but Pride Park is amazing and last month the final corner was finished, so it now holds 37,000. The facilities are fantastic and there's always a real buzz on match days, so I think the emotion of the move passed quite quickly. You have to appreciate history, but everyone realises this is a growing club that is looking to the future."

GOLF

Pabari out to prove Rye serial winner

By John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent

IT WAS no surprise that one of the first figures on the course at Rye yesterday was Neil Pabari. The tall, elegant swinger of a club, who has such an outstanding short game, was keen to familiarise himself again with the course on which he won the President's Putter last January.

By lunchtime on a glorious spring-like day, Pabari had put almost all the finishing touches to his preparations for his attempt to win the Putter again. "It takes a bit of time to reacquire oneself with links golf," Pabari, a member at Sale Golf Club, said. "I came down and played at Royal St George's yesterday just to get in the mood. The course here is very soft. That is very unusual at Rye. It calls for a different style of golf."

Conditions yesterday morning as competitors gathered for the 72nd President's Putter, which starts today, mirrored those of one year ago, when Pabari defeated Jamie Warman by 2 and 1, holing from 15 feet for a two on the 17th to settle matters. But if conditions were similar, Pabari's game was not.

In the past year his handicap has improved from two to plus one and after a successful summer's marauding, during which he won six events on the amateur circuit in the North West, he went close to winning a place for would-be professionals at the final qualifying school in Spain in November. At the first pre-qualifying event, where 120 players competed for eight or nine places, Pabari failed by one stroke to be among that select number. He continued to practise hard and at the second pre-qualifying event he missed out by three strokes.

Someone mischievous appears to have been at work with the draw. Placed together in the bottom quarter are men as distinguished as Charlie Rothero, who won in 1996 and 1997, Pabari and Steve Seman, the winner in 1994, not to mention a few other extremely potent players such as Richard Sanders, the runner-up in 1993, Omar Malik, the Cambridge captain last year, and Warman.

Taxmen put Portsmouth in the dock

By Russell Kempson

THE financial crisis surrounding Portsmouth deepened yesterday when the Inland Revenue issued a winding-up order in the High Court claiming unpaid taxes of £435,000. If the debt is not settled before a scheduled court appearance on February 3, the Nationwide League first division club could be forced out of business.

Portsmouth's parent company, Blue Star Garages, was served this week with a winding-up petition by Try Build, the construction firm that built the new Fratton End stand at Fratton Park 18 months ago. Try Build claims that it is owed more than £400,000 and its petition is due to be heard in the High Court on January 20.

A spokesman for the Inland Revenue said: "Generally speaking, we try to come to some arrangement with anyone who has tax owing. Taking out winding-up petitions or bankruptcy proceedings is a last resort."

Portsmouth are an estimated £5 million in debt and losing £5,000 a day. Martin Gregory, the former chairman, is attempting to sell his 97 per cent shareholding to a consortium headed by Warren Smith, a businessman.

Les Parris, the new chairman, held discussions yesterday with Gregory and representatives of the consortium and said: "Progress has been made, but it's not like selling a secondhand car. You don't just turn up, say you like it and drive away."

Coventry City yesterday signed Morten Hyldegaard, 20, a 6ft 5in Danish goalkeeper, but he must complete the season with Ikast, his club in Denmark, before reporting to Highfield Road in July for pre-season training.

Espen Baardsen, the Tottenham Hotspur goalkeeper, has signed a new five-year contract that will keep him at White Hart Lane until the end of June 2004.

FOOTBALL

Houllier hints at new Evans role

By Stephen Wood

GERARD Houllier, the Liverpool manager, yesterday extended a hand of friendship to Roy Evans, who enabled the Frenchman to take sole charge by leaving the club. In trying to soften the blow, Houllier indicated that he would be happy for Evans to return to work at Anfield.

Evans had served Liverpool for 35 years, on the playing and coaching staff, before he decided to swallow his pride and stepped aside as joint manager, breaking up an experiment that lasted for four months, but had backfired much sooner.

The split from Liverpool was an emotional one for

work in the media. However, he has never indicated that he wanted to leave the game for good, and never declared that he had terminated his association with Liverpool.

It is believed that he would relish a return to the coaching side, but it is unlikely that any such opportunity is being made available by Houllier, who made the point yesterday: "A job at Liverpool does not just involve working with the players in the first team."

The return would be welcomed around the club, for he was a popular servant. Evans, however, shouldered most of the blame for the failure of his partnership with Houllier and may wish for more time to put the episode behind him.

Thierry Bonalair, the Nottingham Forest midfielder, and Horacio Carbonari, the Derby County defender, have been charged with misconduct by the Football Association.

Bonalair, the Frenchman, allegedly involved in an altercation with members of the Sheffield Wednesday management team during Forest's 3-2 defeat at Hillsborough on December 7. Carbonari, an Argentinian, is accused of inciting the crowd during Derby's 2-2 draw at Forest on November 16, in which the defender scored a 72nd-minute equaliser.

Both players have 14 days to respond to the charges and have the option of requesting personal hearings.

Sleevage Borough, of the Football Conference, yesterday appointed Richard Hill as their manager in succession to Paul Fairclough, who was dismissed before Christmas.

Hill, 35, was assistant manager to John Gregory for 15 months at Wycombe Wanderers. The highlight of his playing career was scoring 29 goals in Northampton Town's promotion-winning season from the third division in 1986-87. Hill also played for Watford and Oxford United.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Showpiece events avert clash

SPORTS POLITICS: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and FIFA, the world governing body of football, agreed yesterday not to compete against each other.

The possibility of the world's two biggest sporting events — the Olympic Games and the World Cup — being held in the same year arose after Sepp Blatter, the president of FIFA, announced last weekend that he wanted the World Cup to be held every two years instead of four. But he and Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, agreed that it would be financial disaster for them to compete against each other. "There would be no winners, only losers," Samaranch said.

SKI JUMPING: Jarmo Ahonen, of Finland, the world champion, won the Four Hills Tour by finishing second to Andreas Winkhofer, of Austria, with 255.9 points in the last of the series at Bischofshofen yesterday. Ahonen extended his overall World Cup lead over Martin Schmitt, of Germany, to 115 points.

RUGBY UNION: David Humphreys has won his fitness battle and will captain Ulster in their European Cup semi-final against Stade Français at Ravenhill on Saturday. The Ireland stand-off suffered a shoulder injury late on in the quarter-final victory over Toulouse, the 1996 European champions, last month.

REAL TENNIS: Great Britain, the holders, will meet Australia in the final of the Bathurst Cup, the International team event for amateur players, in Hobart, Tasmania, after taking a winning 3-0 lead in their semi-final against the United States. Australia beat France 5-0.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

The Tredinnick twins had a disaster sitting East-West on this hand, from the 1998 Premier League. But there is one aspect of the deal in which they emerge with credit.

Dealer East		Love all		IMPs	
♠ 886 ♥ J42 ♦ A665 ♣ A32		♠ A43 ♥ Q9874 ♦ 1093 ♣ Q6		♠ 7 ♥ 7 ♦ QJ742 ♣ KJ109754	
W		N		E	
5C		Double		4C	
Pass		Pass		5S	
				Double	
				All Pass	

Contract: Six Spades Doubled, by South. Lead: ace of diamonds.

North's double showed some high cards, rather than being out-and-out penalty. East's double of Six Spades merely showed a defensive trick, and did not have any special significance in requesting an unusual lead. If it had been a Lightner double, the disaster would not have occurred.

West led the ace of diamonds, and East played the queen. Presumably East intended that as a suit preference signal for a switch to hearts. West could see that playing the ace of clubs would be wrong if East had started with an eight-card suit, so decided that the best chance was that the queen of diamonds was a singleton. He continued with a second round of the suit, allowing declarer to ruff away East's jack and later discard his club on the nine of diamonds.

And what was the good thing to be said for East-West at the first table? East must have played the queen of diamonds in tempo, or if he did not, West took no advantage from any fumble. Many pairs would make it quite clear by hesitant carding that the queen of diamonds was a suit-preference signal, not a singleton.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TOTO
a. Altogether
b. A wild dance
c. A house

URKEY
a. A bird
b. A code
c. A game

WARI
a. A cry of "cave"
b. Another bird
c. A game

SHUNGA
a. A temporary camp
b. Dirty pictures
c. A ju-jitsu move

Answers on page 50

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

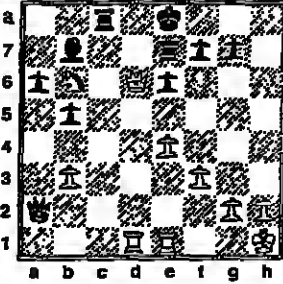
Sokolov ahead

With two rounds to go in the Hastings Premier tournament, Britain's top all-play-all, Ivan Sokolov has a firm grip on the lead. In the seventh round, he strengthened his position with a decisive victory against Tony Miles, of Great Britain.

White: Ivan Sokolov
Black: Tony Miles
Hastings Premier 1999
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4	d5
2 c4	cxd4
3 e3	Nf6
4 Bc4	e6
5 Nf3	e5
6 Qe2	a6
7 dxc5	Bxc5
8 O-O	b5
9 Bb3	Nc6
10 Nbd2	O-O
11 Ne4	Be7
12 Nf6+	Bxf6
13 Qc2	Nb4
14 Bb7+	Kf8
15 Qb3	Nb7
16 Qb4	Bb7
17 Qb4	Rc8
18 e4	Re4
19 Re1	Qe8
20 Nd2	Rd4
21 f3	Qe7
22 Kh1	Ng8
23 Nf1	Rc4
24 Be3	Qe8
25 Bf4	Be5
26 Bxe5	Qxe5
27 Ne3	Rc5
28 b3	Rc8
29 Qg2	Qd2
30 Rd1	Qa2
31 Ng4	Rs7
32 Nb5+	Nf8
33 Qd6+	Re7
34 Qd8+	Re8
35 Qd6+	Re7
36 Nd7+	Re8
37 Nb6	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Laurent Fressinet
Black: James Plaskett
Hastings Premier 1999
Sicilian Defence

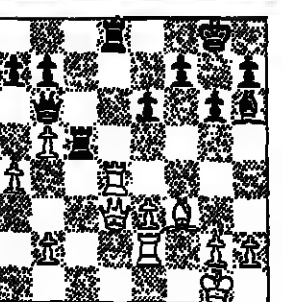
1 e4	c5
2 Nf3	Nc6
3 d4	cxd4
4 Nxd4	e6
5 Qc7	Qc7
6 Bb5	a6
7 Bc3	b5
8 f4	Bb7
9 Nb3	Nf6
10 O-O	d6
11 Qf3	Be7
12 Qf3	Re8
13 a3	a5
14 a4	Nb4
15 Nd4	O-O
16 Ra4	Nc3
17 cxd3	Rf8
18 Nd2	Qd7
19 Rb5	Q5
20 Qg3	Ba8
21 Ra1	exf4
22 Nd4	d5
23 exd5	Bd5
24 Ra6	Ba8
25 Kh1	Qb7
26 Ra7	Qxd2
27 Bd4	Qd4
28 Rf7	Rf8
29 Nh5	Nd7
30 Bg7+	Re7
31 Re1+	Ne5
32 Qe5+	Black resigns

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Anic — Georgiadze, Solin 1998. White appears to be well centralised but there is, in fact, a serious weakness in his position. How did Black uncover this?



Solution on page 50

Tour manager says English domestic cricket needs to be harder and leaner

Gooch calls on players for greater dedication

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

SELFISH, cunning and lazy players. Graham Gooch did not spell it out quite so frankly when he assessed England's performance in the Ashes series, that ended on Tuesday with a 3-1 win for Australia, but he left his audience in no doubt that English cricket suffered from two deeply-rooted maladies that required prompt treatment before a strong national team could emerge.

These things have been said before, and will be said again, but the latest defeat against England's oldest rivals gave Gooch a platform to be heard, and he used it. Without speaking too harshly of the players he has supervised in his position as tour manager, Gooch reiterated what he has felt for many years — that English cricket is too soft to produce a regular supply of Test-class performers.

Did the counties want to contribute to a strong Test team, he asked, and did the players themselves want to become bona fide international cricketers? He also suggested that overseas players were taking money out of the game that could be invested more wisely in the development of young players.

"I think that most county cricketers, if asked, would say they are aspiring to play for England," Gooch said, "but do they know what they have to sacrifice in order to do it? It won't happen just because they have a bit of talent. We can put all sorts of people round them, coaches to help them hone their skills, and make them more rounded people, but the drive must come from within."

If that was a coded message to members of this party who have not excelled and one or two others who failed to make the cut, it was also a warning that England expects a good deal more from young players than they seem prepared to offer. The problem, as Gooch admitted, is that the best players, seen here with the possible exception of one or two bowlers.

County cricket, he pronounced, had to be "stronger and leaner. We need to develop our whole domestic game so that we produce better players so that when they come into the Test side, they are better equipped. If we can do that, then, long after I have gone, I think we will see the benefits when players filter through."

Despite England's customary defeat by Australia, Gooch thought that this team, under a coaching set-up headed by David Lloyd, was making progress, if slowly. He saw

no purpose in changing faces at the top simply because England had lost another series, for the personnel on the field would remain essentially the same.

"The easiest thing to do is to remove the coach, but you can't remove the players and, by and large, most of them are the best we've got. David Lloyd has done a good job. The organisation is good but we've got to get our domestic cricket right."

"We proved in the last two Tests that we could play good cricket and compete with the best. The disappointing thing is that we hit our best form at the end of the series, which is too late. You need to play like that from the beginning."

"I can't fault our guys for the way they have worked at their drills but we did not hang on to our catches. In the last couple of games we held them, and we saw the difference. You can't afford to put down good players, like Steve Waugh at Brisbane. If, in future, there is a marginal selection and one man is a better fielder, he will get the nod. We need to find good fielders, particularly in the close-catching areas."

On overseas players, he sounded quite bullish. "I would not question whether county cricket can afford to pay the money they are taking out of the game. If you are spending £100,000 on an overseas player, is that money well spent? It is not intended as a slight on those players, but are they giving value for money?"

When England return to Test cricket in the summer, against New Zealand, the selectors will have to try to resolve Alec Stewart's role. Released from the burden of keeping wicket for the last two Tests, he responded with some adventurous batting at the top of the order, including a century in Melbourne. "He gave a fresh impetus to the innings," Gooch, who will be one of those selectors, said. "Things change from series to series but he is more comfortable in that position. We really need to find a wicketkeeper who can bat at No 7 and find batsmen who can bowl on a regular basis."

After giving thanks to Bob Cotton, the bowling coach, for his work and emphasising that everything possible had been done for this group of players, Gooch had covered about everything. He will go home this week, leaving the management of the one-day part of the tour to David Graveney. But the sting is in the tail: how badly do the cricketers of England want to be Test players?



Gooch, the England manager, with Stewart on his right, offers his final thoughts on the Ashes series at the press conference yesterday

Woolmer poses no threat to Lloyd

Bob Woolmer, the highly-respected South Africa coach, who would be a prime candidate to succeed David Lloyd in the same role for England, said yesterday that he had other plans in mind. Dennis Amis, the chief executive of Warwickshire and a long-standing personal friend, has asked him if he would like to return to Birmingham, and he intends writing two books after the World Cup this summer.

"To coach another country immediately would almost be treacherous," Woolmer, a former England batsman, said in Cape Town yesterday. "Kerry Packard says that everybody has their price, but I shall need a break when my contract with South Africa ends in June. David Lloyd is a very good coach and England have a strong tradition of coaching. I have not been contacted by the England and Wales Cricket Board."

"I am only really interested at the moment in the World Cup and will weigh up my options afterwards. Part-time work for the United Cricket Board of South Africa is one possibility and I have had other offers for 2000. As well as wanting a rest from the game, I would like a break from flying around the world on tours, which is hard on my wife and children in Cape Town," Woolmer said.

Ivo Tennant says South Africa's coach is not interested in helping England

"So even if I go back to Warwickshire, I shall continue to live here. Besides, with the exchange rate as it is, I could not buy the garage of my house if it were in England. One of the reasons I came to live in South Africa was because my back stiffens up in cold weather."

"I only have to look at Table Mountain every day while remembering that the lights are turned on in England at 3.30 on a winter's afternoon to realise that this is where I want to be."

"My house overlooks the 15th hole of Mowbray golf course and I

have joined the club so as to become part of another society and be able to escape from cricket. The crime, car bombs and Wild West shoot-outs in South Africa are obviously disturbing and there are wider political motives for them. But I wake up to blue skies here," he said.

Woolmer, 50, is contemplating becoming a self-employed consultant on the game. "I might set up something like 'Bob Woolmer Enterprises'," he said. "It is easy for me, as a coach, to see what is needed to make a team or a country successful. And I want to write books

about the modern methods of coaching, including the science of the game, and on my experiences with the emerging South Africa, which Colin Cowdrey suggested I should write."

"I believe that if I continue to work here, I can help black South Africans understand what is needed to play Test cricket — how hard they need to work and the type of skills they require."

"The legacy of the past has to be addressed, but politicians here have to realise they cannot just pick a player off the street and put him in the national side. Test cricket is a game of skill and caps should not be given away."

"Politicians have to understand that they need to provide enough finance for the players to become good enough. The challenge for a coach is then to bring them up to standard. In the next few years the make-up of South Africa's Test team could be 60-40 in favour of blacks. But planting two or three into the side who are not good enough might devalue the game," he said.

"If I go back to county cricket next year, I will be interested to see if two divisions in the championship can work. I have always expressed my reservations about it, but who is to say I am right? I hope it succeeds and that this brings in more money for players who are likely to have shorter spans at the top of the game."



Woolmer stands in captain

Shane Warne will captain Australia in the opening matches of the tri-nations tournament against England in Brisbane on Sunday and Sri Lanka in Sydney next Wednesday in the absence of Steve Waugh, who has a hamstring injury. Warne led Australia against New Zealand last season when Waugh was injured.

Waugh will travel with the squad in order to oversee preparations for the World Cup in England in May, and to receive treatment. Once he is fit, one player will be dropped from the squad.

West Indies subside to another defeat

CAPE TOWN (final day of five): South Africa beat West Indies by 149 runs

THE professionalism and resolve that characterised West Indies cricket for 20 years is evident no more. Their lower order did bat with application yesterday, but this fourth Test match, like the previous three in the series, ended in ignominious defeat. Clive Lloyd, the tour manager, called their performance "abysmal".

In 1975-76, Lloyd was the captain who, after a 5-1 defeat by Australia, had the will to turn West Indies into the most powerful side in the world.

Whether Brian Lara can make something of their present disaster must be in considerable doubt. "I am very unhappy," Lloyd said. "There are guys here who dominate our domestic cricket but who are not up to international standard."

Lloyd was especially critical of West Indies batsmen. The lower order emphasised how good these conditions were by taking the overnight score of 93 for six to 271, their highest total of the series. True, Donald was not fit to bowl, but then neither was he when they collapsed on Tuesday.

There is one remaining Test in this series — West Indies

FROM IVO TENNANT IN CAPE TOWN

have never been beaten 5-0 — and there is some time to find replacements before Australia come to the Caribbean in the spring or before the World Cup. With the exception of Jimmy Adams, who is injured, there is no obvious successor to Lara, who would not wish to play under another captain.

Of the lower order who kept South Africa in the field until shortly before 3pm, Jacobs made an unbeaten 64, his highest score in Test cricket. McLean contributed 39 in his exuberant way and Dillon 36

through strokes that suggested he deserves better than to go in last — but why could not Lara, Hooper, the openers and Chandernagor play like this?

Given that he is 31, Jacobs is not exactly one of the future, yet his bat was admirably straight throughout his innings, which included ten fours. He might find himself moved up the order at Centurion Park, for it is difficult to see who else should open rather than him. He and Dillon added 64 for the last wicket, which, as with McLean's 39 off 49 balls that included three sixes and four fours, was diverting cricket.

Appropriately, it was Jacques Kallis who took the final wicket, his fifth of the innings. He is only the eighth cricketer to have achieved that, a century and a half-century in the same Test match. Sobers, Botham and Imran Khan are among those who have done so.

Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, believes Kallis could become one of the best players that South Africa has produced. He was, inevitably, named man of the match by Conrad Hunte. Warwickshire have a verbal agreement with Allan Donald for the South Africa fast bowler to return to Edgbaston as overseas player for the 1999 season. The one-year deal is linked with a benefit in what will be Donald's tenth county campaign since 1987. Donald will replace Brian Lara as the Warwickshire overseas player after the West Indies batsman stood in for him and took over the county captaincy while Donald was on Test duty for South Africa last summer.

Cairns ensues India prolong barren run

HAMILTON (final day of five): New Zealand drew with India

NEW ZEALAND won their home series against India after forcing a draw by compiling a formidable second innings score in the third and final Test yesterday. They took the series 1-0, leaving India without a victory away from the sub-continent in 19 Tests. Chris Cairns led the assault that put an Indian victory out of reach on the last day with a punishing 126. When Stephen Fleming declared at 464 for eight shortly after lunch, India were 414 runs behind and could only hope to stage off an unlikely defeat.

Their task was made easier after injuries to Dion Nash and Daniel Vettori forced New Zealand to take the field without two of their specialist bowlers. Rahul Dravid completed his second century of the match, making 103 not out and Saurav Ganguly was undefeated on 101.

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 386 (C.D. McMillan 92, R.D. Ross 87, M.J. Horne 63, J. Smith 5 for 95)	
Second innings	
M.D. Bell 104 for 2	25
M.J. Horne 63 for 3	25
S.P. Fleming 6 for 3	18
R.G. Twiss 66 for 4	4
C.D. McMillan 92 for 1	64
J.A.C. Paterson 3 for 3	50
C.L. Cairns 126 for 8	126
D.J. Nash 104 for 1	63
D.J. Nash 104 for 1	63
Extras (B 9, LB 7, W 1, NB 5)	25
Total (all batsmen)	484
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-88, 3-78, 4-85, 5-225, 6-225, 7-372, 8-464	
BOWLING: P. Fraser 33-8-75-1, S. Ganguly 10-3-102-1, S. Ganguly 27-8-101-1, Kumble 45-13-124-2, Tendulkar 7-0-30-2, Singh 6-1-27-0	
INDIA: First innings 416 (R. Dravid 180, J. Smith 75, S.R. Tendulkar 57, C.L. Cairns 4 for 107)	
Second innings	
A. Jackson 6 for 3	21
N.S. Sidhu 6 for 3	13
R. Dravid 180 for 1	103
S.C. Ganguly 104 for 1	103
Extras (B 9, LB 7, W 1, NB 5)	25
Total (all batsmen)	289
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-33, 2-55, 3-107, 4-170, 5-225, 6-225, 7-372, 8-464	
BOWLING: D. Nash 10-3-102-1, S. Ganguly 27-8-101-1, Kumble 45-13-124-2, Tendulkar 7-0-30-2, Singh 6-1-27-0	
Umpires: R.E. Koster (South Africa) and D.B. Cowie	

Egyptians prove unbeatable

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

EGYPT dominated the lower age groups of the CGU British junior open championships in Sheffield, allowing other nations only eight points in four finals at under-13 and under-15 levels.

These statistics were assisted by the 9-2, 9-3 victory by Yasser El Halaby over Omar Refaai in the all-Egyptian boys' under-15 final, and by Sarah Badr's 9-6, 10-8, 9-7 win over Rania El Wely, who is only ten, in the girls' under-13 final.

With Tom Richards, of Surrey, failing to win a point against Rami Ashour in the boys' under-13 final, it was left to Alison Waters, of Middlesex, to salvage the only session points from Egypt. She lost 9-1, 9-7, 9-0 in 17 minutes to Omneya El Kawy in the girls' under-15 final.

Yorkshire players were hoping to duplicate the Egyptian achievement in the older finals last night. Jenny Duncalf and James Willson were due to face Nicol David of Malaysia, and Gregory Calder, of France, in the under-17 event, while Cheryl Beaumont and Nick Matthews were in the under-19 finals against Elisabet Sado, of Spain, and Ong Beng Hoo, of Malaysia, who was a doubtful starter because of flu.

SNOW REPORTS									
Location	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Forecast	Temp (°C)	Wind	Pressure	Humidity	Cloud	Notes
Austria	20-70	Fair	icy	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Kitzbühel	35-150	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Obertauern	35-150	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Sochi	20-70	Fair	icy	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Canada									
Lake Louise	95-122	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
France									
Alpe d'Huez	30-170	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Argentien	60-80	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Arctique	20-100	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
La Clusaz	55-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
La Plagne	55-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
La Tignes	37-160	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Les Arcs	20-80	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Megève	30-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Maribel	30-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Tignes	30-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Val d'Isère	30-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Val Thorens	30-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Italy									
Cervinia	30-150	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Corviglia	25-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Livigno	25-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
M. C. Campiglio	25-100	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Switzerland									
Crans Montana	10-70	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Devol	15-120	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Grandval	15-120	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Murten	20-80	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Sas Fee	20-80	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
St. Moritz	10-50	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Verbier	10-50	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Wengen	15-80	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Zermatt	15-80	Fair	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
United States									
Aspen	35-150	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1
Deer Valley	77-85	Good	Open	-10	Sun	1012	80	2	4/1

SCOREBOARD FROM CAPE TOWN

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 406-8 dec	
C.L. Cairns 92, R.D. Ross 87, M.J. Horne 63, J. Smith 5 for 95	
Second innings 225-7 dec	
M.D. Bell 104 for 2, M.J. Horne 63 for 3, S.P. Fleming 6 for 3, R.G. Twiss 66 for 4, C.D. McMillan 92 for 1, J.A.C. Paterson 3 for 3, C.L. Cairns 126 for 8, D.J. Nash 104 for 1	
Extras (B 9, LB 7, W 1, NB 5)	25
Total	484
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-88, 3-78, 4-85, 5-225, 6-225, 7-372, 8-464	
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Umpires: R.E. Koster (South Africa) and D.B. Cowie	

FOOTBALL

Tuesday's late results
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Bristol 1, Oxford 0. Second division: Plymouth 1, Exeter 0. Third division: Torquay 1, Bournemouth 0. Fourth division: Yeovil 1, Barnstaple 0.
FOOTBALL LEAGUE: First division: Arsenal 1, Manchester United 0. Second division: Liverpool 1, Tottenham 0. Third division: Sheffield Wednesday 1, Sheffield United 0. Fourth division: Reading 1, Luton 0.
SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Rangers 1, Celtic 0. Second division: Aberdeen 1, Dundee 0. Third division: St. Johnstone 1, Dundee United 0. Fourth division: Falkirk 1, Partick Thistle 0.
IRISH LEAGUE: First division: Shamrock Rovers 1, Bohemians 0. Second division: Sligo Rovers 1, Drogheda 0. Third division: Derry City 1, Derry Wanderers 0. Fourth division: Carrick Rangers 1, Carrick United 0.
WELSH LEAGUE: First division: Cardiff City 1, Swansea City 0. Second division: Newport City 1, Merthyr Tydfil 0. Third division: Barry Town 1, Carmarthen Town 0. Fourth division: Aberystwyth Town 1, Bala Town 0.

THURSDAY'S EARLY RESULTS
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Bristol 1, Oxford 0. Second division: Plymouth 1, Exeter 0. Third division: Torquay 1, Bournemouth 0. Fourth division: Yeovil 1, Barnstaple 0.
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there's still a TV-owner who doesn't yet know who she is, how much she earns. Carol and her builders, designers and technical experts are spending the next few weeks erecting an eco-friendly high-tech house for the millennium. Along with gadget tests, a makeovers of people's houses, the series is part *Tomorrow's World*, part *Changing Rooms*, part *Good Housekeeping* Institute product testing, and part *Through The Keyhole* (this week: architect John Young's minimalist penthouse).

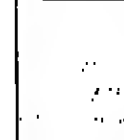
This programme is not to

new series this week, *Carol Vorderman's Better Homes on TV*. It's sobering to think that all the hundreds of new television series that Vorderman will present over the coming decades are already "out there" in the future, if you believe Einstein. You might find this an incentive to throw in your lot with the quantum theorists.

CHANNEL 5

6.00m 5 News and Sport (7068113)
7.00 WildlifeWorld The impact of steam
on Victorian rural life (t) (923622)
7.30 Wilkinson's (2051179)
7.35 Winkie's (Hoskins) (9567129)
7.45 Wildlife World (t) (1276260)
8.30 Deppledown Farm (1226591)
9.00 Animal House (2903303)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards
(4932858)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (65564)
10.20 Sunset Beach Marnie attempts to
reclaim her memory (T) (2284113)
11.10 Leezza (t) (2171939)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (1237007)
12.30pen Family Affairs Dawn works his
way through (t) (7) **5 News U**
(9003738)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful She
taken to hospital (T) (9235558)
1.30 The Roseanne Show (9002007)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6423007)
3.20 Good Afternoon An hour of le-
isefysty and documentary (481557)
3.30 92 Grosvenor Street (TSV)
Winnipeg advertising channel
from the United Kingdom and
800-913-Nerz conducted Norway

5.20 Sunset Beach (T) (T) (6248991)
6.00 100 Per Cent (5457216)
6.30 Family Affairs Chris makes a status announcement (T) (5375668).
7.00 5 News (T) (6427823)
7.30 Champions of the Wild Profile conservationist, Courtyard Parter, w ranch in Kenya houses more than black and white rhinos (T) (5364555).



Alan Austin stars as a man str

(in the Sahara Desert) (8pm)

8.00 Survivor Real-life tales of endurance the head of an and desert, in the heart of intrepid English adventurer (15) 5 New (1996) (5596502)

9.00 Ultimate Life (TVM 1996) adulterous father of a seemingly orphan family is shocked to find his conquest is his long-lost daughter, has turned to prostitution. Don't miss the mad King David Dwyer, Murphy and Blair Brown. Directors Larry Shaw (T) (52308084)

10.40 Sex and Shopping The author is Duty and the comedian Arabella discuss the popularity of the lesbian market (10/13) (5378522)

11.10 The Big Dirty Show Chest music (8129129)

11.50 Live and Dangerous Football at testating Ajax v Feyenoord in Holland (2581201)

4.00pm Prisoner: Cell Block H defends her hero against an accusation of rape while Crozier and Helen's friends (3190086)

5.30 100 Per Cent (8) (5363633)

On Focus on LIFE **Dead**
 Dead 12.30
 Years 12.30
 Zone 3.30

On Drama
 A Painted Lady 12.30
 A Baby on the Home 12.30
 on Rescue 12.30
 Lookabout 12.30
 Country, 12.30
 Fishing 12.30
 Strangers 12.30
 Zone Up 12.30
 and 12.30
 Bob White 12.30
 and Norm 12.30

HISTORY
 4.00pm The World at War: Atten 5.00pm
 The Thunder Flying to War
 Moments: Tutenkharn 7.00pm
 Admiral Lord Nelson

CARLTON FOLK (CABLE)
 9.00pm Folk Network Daily 9.30pm
 Folk Network Daily 9.30pm
 10.30pm William Thompson Cooks
 What's Cooking? 11.30pm Cook's
 Kitchen 11.30pm
 12.30pm For Better, For Worse 1.00pm
 1.30pm The Gilded Age 2.00pm
 2.30pm The Country Kitchen
 Folk Network Daily 3.00pm Retrospice
 3.30pm Cook's Kitchen: Country 4.00pm
 The Second Up 4.30pm Country Nights

LIVING
 5.00pm Try and Catch 6.30pm
 Folk 6.30pm Johnson and Friends 6.40pm
 Try and Catch 6.40pm
 7.00pm The Country Kitchen 7.30pm

[illegible]

2



SARAH POTTER 47

Derby County adopt family way of keeping in trim

SPORT

THURSDAY JANUARY 7 1999

RUGBY UNION 48

Sedgley Park plan to bring Wasps down to earth



Formula One newcomers prepare to fight ban on alternative car liveries

FIA facing collision course

THE newest team in Formula One motor racing will take on the sport's rulers today in an unprecedented confrontation, even before it has turned a wheel in its first season.

British American Racing (BAR) is probably the richest team to set up in Formula One in the modern era and is flexing its muscles by threatening to overturn the established conventions. Backed with an estimated £100 million from British American Tobacco (BAT), the team yesterday unveiled its cars and drivers, but the hype of the launch was overshadowed when the vells were drawn back.

On one side Jacques Villeneuve was in red and white overalls with his dramatically styled white car with red stripes, to reflect its Lucky Strike cigarette branding; on the other was Ricardo Zonta, the young Brazilian, in the blue and yellow of BAT's 555 brand.

Craig Pollock, the BAR managing director, wants the cars to line up like that all season, contrary to the rules and traditions of a sport in which teams have always run two cars in the same livery. Within hours of the launch, lawyers will be sitting down in Paris today to hear his case, that he has the right to determine the colours and branding of his team's cars and not the governing body, the FIA.

The action, trying to defeat Formula One's rule-makers even before the team is officially part of what is probably the most lucrative but strictly controlled of sports, is audacious, though, the consequences could be far-reaching.

Money, inevitably, is at the root of the row, with BAT clearly wanting to see a handsome payback for its massive investment, in terms of huge television exposure for two of its most important brands. It seems likely, though, that Pollock will be stonewalled, with Formula One's rulers — not unused to encouraging the odd pound or two into the sport — unwilling to let commercialism run rampant.

If BAR wins, then there is nothing to stop other cigarette-sponsored teams turning out



Villeneuve, left, and Zonta display the controversial new colours of the BAR team when it was launched at its Northamptonshire headquarters yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

in different liveries, presenting a multicoloured grid of mobile advertising hoardings instead of traditional team colours that are easily identified.

Pollock was in a belligerent mood, pointing out that the issue was "critical" to the funding of the new team. Commercial branding on the cars was almost the only area of control left to the teams, he said, which was why he was prepared to push the FIA into arbitration.

"The reason we have gone to arbitration is to protect our commercial rights," he said. "What we have on our cars is the only way we have to finance our team, so we want the right to decide that."

Just as clearly, his multinational backers are not going to roll over in the face of FIA opposition and looming European Union bans on tobacco advertising and sponsorship.

Martin Broughton, the BAT chairman, gave warning that people who thought the cigarette industry had no future were wrong, and said that sponsorship of the new team was proof of that. Instead, he asserted that millions of people "enjoyed a good smoke,

while knowing the risks that go with it", and looked forward with "creeping and surging excitement" to showing off the colourful Lucky Strike and 555 liveries via television in 180 markets around the world. "We are proud of what we do and that pride will be enhanced in 1999," he said.

The commitment is certainly impressive, with BAR in operation within a year, underwritten by the cigarette company's huge sponsorship. Apart from a futuristic new factory, built from scratch at Brackley in Northamptonshire, the team has Villeneuve, the 1997 world champion, and Zonta, the GT champion with Mercedes this year.

Villeneuve said that he was not only attracted by a £10 million salary and a share in the business, but because he sees more immediate potential with the newcomers than with a Williams team that failed to register a victory last season for the first time in a decade.

Pollock, Villeneuve's former manager, said that the diminutive Canadian had the same "twinkle in his eye" as when he first joined Formula One from American IndyCars in 1996, and Villeneuve was brimming with confidence, particularly after a first test session in which he was fourth quickest.

"It is exciting," Villeneuve said. "It is a new team starting from scratch and the car has

shown already that it is very fast. We have to set high goals. If you go into Formula One with the right budget, the right people and the right frame of mind, then you can do well."

"Teams which go into Formula One only expecting to finish in the first ten probably never do better than that. If I didn't believe we were competitive then I wouldn't have come to BAR."

The portents are good. The car has been constructed under the direction of Adrian Reynard, whose company has scored a debut victory in every series it has entered and was one of the most successful constructors in IndyCars. BAT's vast resources meant that the

team could recruit some of the best talent, including Jock Clear, Villeneuve's race engineer, from Williams.

However, the stumbling block of what colours Villeneuve and BAR will race under remains. A decision might not be announced today, though it is beyond doubt that a settlement will have to be reached before the first race, in Melbourne on March 7.

Even Villeneuve, resplendent in his new overalls, was not sure what colour his car would be this season. With Pollock and Broughton at his side, and hordes of press notebooks poised, he declared: "It is nothing to do with me."

Basketball dispute resolved after six months

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE unthinkable was averted yesterday when the National Basketball Association (NBA) players and team owners reached a deal to end their 191-day dispute and begin a season of about 50 games during the first week of next month. NBA officials confirmed the agreement, after all-night negotiations, just seven hours before the union was scheduled to vote on the final ownership offer.

"I don't think anyone won. Both sides lost on it," Fred Hoiberg, of Indiana Pacers, said. "It will take some time to get the game back where it was. Hopefully we can get back to work soon and put a good product on the court."

David Stern, the NBA commissioner, and Billy Hunter, a union executive director, worked out a deal that saved the sport from a humiliating shutdown, but three months of the season have already elapsed. A total of 437 games have been lost and the number will reach 659 if another month is needed to start the season. Had a compromise not been reached, the sport would have been facing the first full-season shutdown in its history.

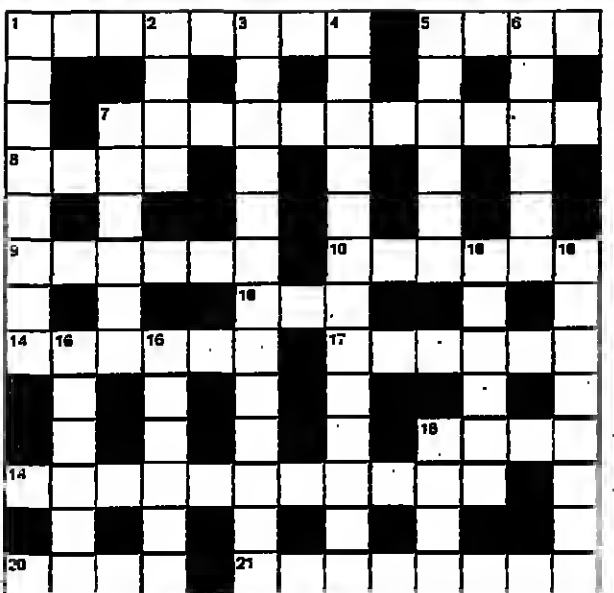
The agreement ends a bitter battle that began on July 1 when owners locked out players, claiming they were being driven into bankruptcy by huge salaries that last season took 57 per cent of the league's team-related income. NBA players have the highest average salaries in North American sport at \$2.6 million (about £1.5 million).

"I wouldn't blame the fans if they never came back," Jeff Hornacek, of Utah, said. "Neither side is coming out of this thing looking good."

Indiana Pacers are favourites to win the NBA finals, which are likely to be staged in July. They have the core of their squad from last season, when they were eliminated by the Chicago Bulls, the eventual winners, in the semi-finals.

Their players have conducted workouts together in Indianapolis. In contrast, the Bulls are not certain to have Michael Jordan, who is considering retirement. Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman — three of their leading players last season — back among their ranks.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1608

ACROSS

- 1 One comes before swallow darts (Shak.) (8)
- 5 Oberon's assistant (MND) (4)
- 7 Very steep (descent) (11)
- 8 Depend (on) (4)
- 9 Think about (6)
- 10 Beginning (6)
- 13 Drink tiny mouthful (2)
- 14 Indelible skin design (6)
- 17 Business magnate (6)
- 18 An astringent: looks like a Scots chimney (4)
- 19 Insubordinate (11)
- 20 Sudden shake, shock (4)
- 21 Devil worshipper (8)

DOWN

- 1 Old, broken down (8)
- 2 Rage, power (4)
- 3 GP's insistence (7,6)
- 4 Butterfly enthusiast (13)
- 5 Strongly effective (6)
- 6 Period of study, direction of travel (6)
- 7 One orbiting star (6)
- 11 Ruined (6)
- 12 Block of flats: rooms in this (8)
- 15 One lacking normal pigment (6)
- 16 Gullet (6)
- 18 In a while (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1607

- ACROSS: 1 Slant 7 Tyranny 8 Audible 9 Psychic
11 Feeble 13 Truculent 14 Fatalist 19 Lolita
21 Garbled 23 Ecuador 24 Passive 25 Tarry
DOWN: 1 Scarf 2 Added 3 Tybalt 4 Step 5 Cancel
6 Ancient 10 Social 12 Ermine 14 Ramadan 16 Ambush
17 Locust 18 Girder 20 Array 22 Deep

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Premiership considers referees becoming wired for sound

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

REFEREES and their assistants in the FA Cup and Premiership are likely to be wired for sound next season. In an effort to increase communication between the three match officials and help the decision-making of the referee, they will wear earpieces and microphones.

The FA Premier League, which runs the Premiership, will first experiment during matches in its youth academy leagues towards the end of this season. If that proves to be successful, the high-tech equipment will be introduced into the Premiership in time for the 1999-2000 campaign. It has already been given the blessing of Fifa, the sport's world governing body. "We've still got to do all the costings, but I would think it's 95 per cent certain of going ahead," Philip Don, the Premier League referees' officer, said yesterday. "I believe it will assist the control of the match officials and, if technology can be developed to assist the referee, not replace him, then we've got to investigate it."

Initially, only the assistants will wear microphones. "The referee will have just an earpiece," Don said. "You can control what the referee says,

but not the players. It could be embarrassing for them if the referee had a mike and it could also mean that the linesmen were deafened every time he blows his whistle."

Rugby union has used a "talking flag" system for three years, by which the touch judges can talk to the referee through a microphone and transmitter in the pole of their flags. They press a button on

the hand grip when they want to be heard.

"It looks a bit like they're eating an ice-cream cone," Nick Bunting, the national referee development officer of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), said. "The referees pick up what is said via a receiver under their shirts or attached to their shorts and then through the earpiece."

"It has gone exceptionally

well and is an excellent way of providing feedback to the referee of what is going on behind his back. It has really helped in cleaning up the minor infringements."

The radio sets, for which the RFU has its own frequency, cost £1,500 and are used by all officials in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. "We've had instances of officials picking up wavelengths from illegal radio operators and security firms, but other than that, we've had no problems," Bunting said.

Rugby referees use microphones only when their games are televised live. "They wear another transmitter, pack to the studio and the viewers can hear their decisions straight away," Bunting said. "The explanation is very clear and it's a brilliant way of educating the spectator." Football's assistant referees already have buttons on their flags, which they use to attract the referee's attention via his receiver.

Mike Reed, one of the Premiership's leading referees, welcomed the new move. "If it will help communication, I'm all for it," he said. "Anything that aids control has got to be good. I'd prefer it to be two-way, though. I'd like to be able to talk to my assistants."



Listening in: Brian Campsall has been one of rugby's pioneers



WHICH WAS THE GREATEST YEAR FOR SPORT? page 46

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